

10 Ways to Help Prevent Flood Damage



1. Know your property well

This action may seem simple but knowing the condition of your home before a flood can help to determine what damage was caused by the storm. Maintaining your gutters and maintaining your property can help to reduce damage to your home.

2. Retrofit your home

FEMA offers [6 methods of retrofitting](#) which can help to prevent flood damage, but can be costly and for some homes impossible. Some of the methods suggested include elevating your home and relocating your home. Some options are more costly than others so it is best to investigate which method is best for your home.

3. Dry floodproof your home

Dry floodproofing makes the property watertight and protects the inside of the home from flood damage. This is not as expensive as retrofitting, but does require maintenance. FEMA provides information about dry floodproofing in [Selecting Appropriate Mitigation Measures for Floodprone Structures](#).

4. Install sewer backflow valves

Some storms can cause sewer lines to back up into the drain pipes of the property. Consult with a licensed plumber about installing a backflow valve or other options that may be available to help prevent sewage back up from spilling into the home. FEMA provides [a guide to installing sewer backflow valves](#) on their website.

5. Install sump pump system if you have below-grade floors

Sump pumps are used to divert water away from your home when ground water accumulates on your property. Purchasing a sump pump now to help mitigate the effects of future flooding and flood damage may help decrease the costs of cleaning up after future flood damage without a sump pump already in place.

6. Raise electrical system components

Raise switches, sockets, and circuit breakers a foot above your flood level in order to help prevent electrical damage. These modifications should be done by licensed professionals who know and can meet all applicable Building and Fire Code requirements, and obtain any applicable permits for the proposed work.

7. Raise appliances and utilities

Consider elevating major appliances such as washers, dryers, water heaters, and furnaces onto cement blocks. Appliances can also be anchored and protected with a floodwall or shield or covering. The protections for anchored appliances may still allow water to seep in but may filter out debris and dirt that can be far more damaging than water. Consult with appropriate plumbing, HVAC, and electrical professionals to have this done safely, and check appliance manuals and with manufacturers BEFORE anchoring or raising appliances to make sure this will

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not damage or break the appliance, or void any warranty in place. You will also want to confirm with your local government this does not violate any Building, Fire or other safety Codes.

8. Anchor and raise outdoor equipment

Equipment left outside during a flood can wash away and get damaged but more importantly can potentially damage your home. Fuel tanks can be important to anchor because they can become detached and cause damage. Outdoor air-conditioning units and generators may also be raised above the flood level for your property. Consult with appropriate plumbing, HVAC, and electrical professionals for having this done safely, and check appliance manuals and with manufacturers BEFORE anchoring or raising equipment to make sure this will not damage or break the equipment, or void any warranty in place. You will also want to confirm with your local government this does not violate any Building, Fire or other safety Codes.

9. Use permeable paving around your home

Using permeable pavement, paving stones, or grasspave which allows for water to seep into the ground may help to avoid flooding. The conventional pavement options often block water flow and can increase the chances of flooding. A less expensive option may be to forego paving and simply apply gravel which can perform the same function as the permeable pavement.

10. Right before a flood take some immediate precautions

Before a flood, if you can do it safely, take time to move furniture and rugs to a higher floor or raise them off the ground. The [Connecticut Department of Public Health](#) suggests if you know how to correctly and safely do so, consider shutting off electricity at the main power switch and close the main gas valve before evacuating. Place all important documents or personal belongings in an area least likely to be affected by the flood. Again, checking your gutters can help to reduce damage done to your home.

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