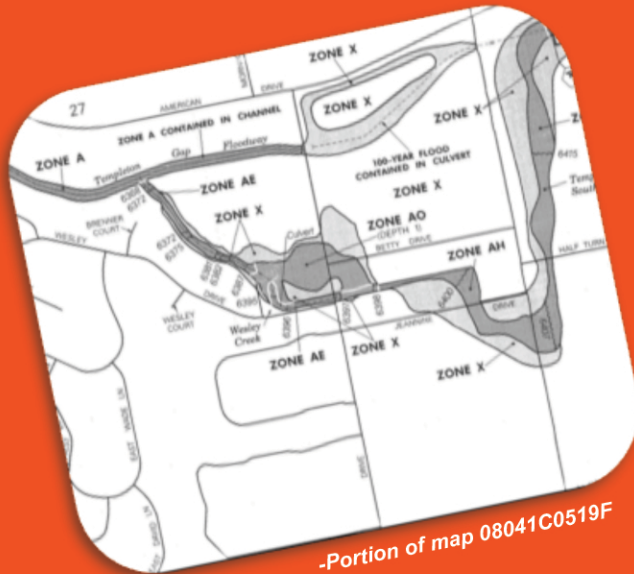


# WHAT IS A FLOODPLAIN?

The natural functions and benefits of floodplains include storage areas for floodwaters, storm water purification, wetlands, and grazing areas of wildlife. Not only do these areas reduce potential flood damage, but also preserve the natural beauty of the Pikes Peak Region. Bear Creek Park, Green Mountain Falls Town Park, Schryver Park in Manitou Springs, Monument Lake and Fountain Creek Regional Park are examples of natural areas that benefit the community by protecting and enhancing the quality of life.

Maps of floodplains and hazards are available at the Penrose Public Library, Pikes Peak Regional Building Department, or on-line at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)



**Please Educate your  
school children about flooding**

**DON'T FORGET:**

Inventory and photograph  
your home's contents.

Put important papers and  
insurance policies in a safe place!

Regional Floodplain Management Office  
**Pikes Peak Regional Building Department**  
2880 International Circle, Colorado Springs, CO, 80910

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# ARE YOU READY FOR A FLOOD?



**WARNING:**  
 **The risk  
is real.**

## Turn Around, Don't Drown!!!

**MAY 31, 1935**

Monument Creek flooded within  
one hour, killing four people.

**JUNE 17, 1993**

Flash flooding, and Fountain  
Creek overflowed.

**APRIL-MAY 1995**

Black Squirrel Creek spilled over  
railroad tracks, damaged creek  
bed and 40 roads; 24 roads were  
closed.

**JULY 30, 1998**

Heavy rain impacted Security and  
Widefield communities.

**MAY 1999**

National Disaster was declared  
after flooding in El Paso County.  
Infrastructure damage at over 80  
sites. 14.5 inches of rain fell in  
less than 48 hours. Over \$30 mil-  
lion in damages.

**AUG. 2012**

Flooding caused damage to  
several businesses and homes in  
Manitou Springs, at least three  
people injured, and a mudslide  
closed part of U.S. Hwy 24.

**SEPT. 2013**

Cheyenne Creek Flooding,  
residents pre-evacuated due to  
danger, roads closed, thousands  
without power.



# PROTECTING PROPERTIES BEFORE A FLOOD

## Flood Insurance is Available for Property Owners & Renters

Your property is located in or near a flood hazard area as mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). If a house is located within the FEMA regulated floodplain, there is a 26% chance that the structure will be inundated by a 100-year flood event during the course of a 30-year mortgage. Standard insurance policies typically do not cover damage from flooding. Because your jurisdiction participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), flood insurance is available for all properties, including those damaged previously by flooding. Coverage must be in effect at least 30 days prior to a flooding event. There are two types of coverage: structural and contents. Be sure to check with your insurance agent for more detailed information on flood insurance. Information is also available on FEMA's website at: [www.fema.gov/business/nfip](http://www.fema.gov/business/nfip)

## Mitigation Measures to Protect Property

Flood protection measures vary in required expense and expertise. Benefits depend on the individual property, structure and the depth of 100-year flood levels at the site. Some examples of mitigation measures include lot grading, constructing a waterproof veneer to exterior walls, and elevating the heating, ventilation and cooling systems and electrical components. Before beginning such a project, call the Floodplain Mgmt. Office at 719-327-2907 to discuss permit requirements. Lastly, you should face your downspout away from your home to avoid basement flooding.

## Property Improvements Or Reconstruction

New construction, alteration to any structure, and land modifications, such as excavation, dredging, filling or landscaping, require a review and permit issued by the Floodplain Management Office. Improvements that exceed 50% of the current market value are required to meet NFIP regulations for new construction. This also applies to substantially damaged structures, regardless the source of the damage. New construction requires that the lowest floor, including the basement, have an elevation of at least one foot greater than the 100-year flood depth. Construction plans submitted to Regional Building will be reviewed to insure compliance with local and federal floodplain codes.

## Personal Safety Preparation

Plan an escape route to higher ground that avoids streams, waterways, and known flooding areas near your home, work, shopping and mountain outings. Have ready for use a battery powered radio and flashlight with extra batteries. Report any debris or blockage in drainage culverts or streams to the appropriate maintenance agency listed on this brochure. Unreported blockages in culverts or streams can impede water flows and result in greater property damage. Lastly, hurricanes might not be an issue in Colorado, but be aware when traveling coastal and know all evacuation routes.

# PROTECTING LIVES DURING A FLOOD

## Flood Monitoring & Warning Systems

The Floodplain Management office at Pikes Peak Regional Building Department established a flood monitoring system in the 1980s. Now maintained by El Paso County, the system includes 60 sensors on 40 sites. The sensor information is communicated to emergency management agencies and television and radio stations that broadcast "flash flood watch" alerts of weather conditions that may result in flooding. When an "urban and small stream flood advisory" is issued, be watchful of streams for fast developing flash flooding. Avoid traveling near those areas. When a "flash flood warning" is issued, immediately leave the flood hazard area for higher ground.

## Deadly Currents in Shallow Water, Washed Out Roads & Bridges

Do not attempt to walk or drive through flowing water. Drowning is the number one cause of flood deaths, particularly during flash floods. Don't underestimate the speed of flood waters. Six inches of flowing water can sweep a person off their feet and 2 feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles. Avoid power lines and electrical wires. Second to drowning, fatalities during floods are caused by electrocution. Electrical current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to the utility company and 911. If your home is in danger or is being flooded, leave immediately, and then contact the utilities company to turn off electricity and gas connections.

# PROTECTING LIVES AFTER A FLOOD

## Returning To Your Property

Be cautious when returning to your home or business after a flood. Return home only when authorities indicate it is safe. Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have been weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car. Use extreme caution when entering buildings; there may be hidden damage, particularly in foundations. Listen for news reports to learn whether the community's water supply is safe to drink. Gas leaks should be reported immediately to the utilities department. Do not smoke or use candles, lanterns, or any other type of flame when there is a gas leak risk.



# AGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

## Flood risk, construction, land modification

Regional Floodplain Management **719-327-2907**  
Floodplain Information Online [www.pprbd.org](http://www.pprbd.org)  
Colorado Water Conservation Board **303-866-3441**  
Army Corp of Engineers (Pueblo) **719-543-9459**

## Emergency management

Colorado Springs Office **719-385-5957**  
El Paso County Office **719-575-8400**  
**Emergency 911**

## Drainage facility repair/maintenance

Colorado Springs Streets Division **385-5934**  
El Paso County Dept. of Transportation **520-6460**  
Fountain City Hall **382-8521**  
Green Mountain Falls Town Hall **684-9414**  
Manitou Springs Streets Dept. **685-5596**  
Monument Public Works Dept. **481-2436**  
Palmer Lake City Hall **481-2953**

## ARE YOU AWARE?

Pikes Peak Regional Building Department's Floodplain Management Office works with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Flood Insurance Program, and local and state agencies to reduce risks to lives and properties in floodplains. The Floodplain Management Office serves Colorado Springs, Fountain, Green Mountain Falls, Manitou Springs, Monument, Palmer Lake and unincorporated El Paso County.

The office maintains maps and a database that identifies properties in a mapped floodplain, assists property owners in preventing potential flood damage, reviews plans and issues permits for construction land modification in designated floodplains. It retains FEMA Elevation Certificates and promotes public safety measures. The office investigates complaints of floodplain regulation violations such as property and structural changes without a permit, and dumping or altering stream channels and drainage culverts—both are strictly prohibited.

Report violations to the Floodplain Management Office, El Paso County Department of Transportation or the public works department of the specific jurisdiction.