

Flood Hazards in New Haven: Am I At Risk?

Inland and coastal flooding are expensive problems in many areas of New Haven. The City is exposed to both **cyclonic disturbances** from the west and southwest as well as to **coastal storms** that move up the Atlantic coast from tropical origins and can attain **hurricane intensity** in the summer and fall. Hurricane Irene (2011) and Storm Sandy (2012) were reminders of how important it is to be prepared for floods. Most of the inland flooding is caused by **storms with heavy rainfall**, but localized flash floods can occur in parts of the City with **insufficient drainage**. **Storm surges** can cause coastal flooding.

The area of the City that is most vulnerable to flood hazards is called the **Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)**, which is determined by FEMA using the 100-year flood level. The 100-year flood level is defined as total area expected to be flooded during a severe flood that has a 1% chance of occurring, or being exceeded, in a given year. Put differently, a 100-year flood is expected to be equalled or exceeded once every 100-years period. However, smaller floods can and do occur more frequently and can still cause considerable damage.

In New Haven, **1,901 acres of land are located within the 100-year flood boundary**. Within this boundary, there are several vulnerable areas, including Morris Cove, which has particular problems with flooding because of its proximity to Morris Creek and the coast. Properties adjacent to the West River, Mill River, and Quinnipiac River and properties around New Haven Harbor are also at risk for flooding.

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City of New Haven
C O N N E C T I C U T



Resources:

To check if you **live or work within the SFHA**, floodplain **maps** for the City are available for public review at the City Plan Department or online at msc.fema.gov/portal/home

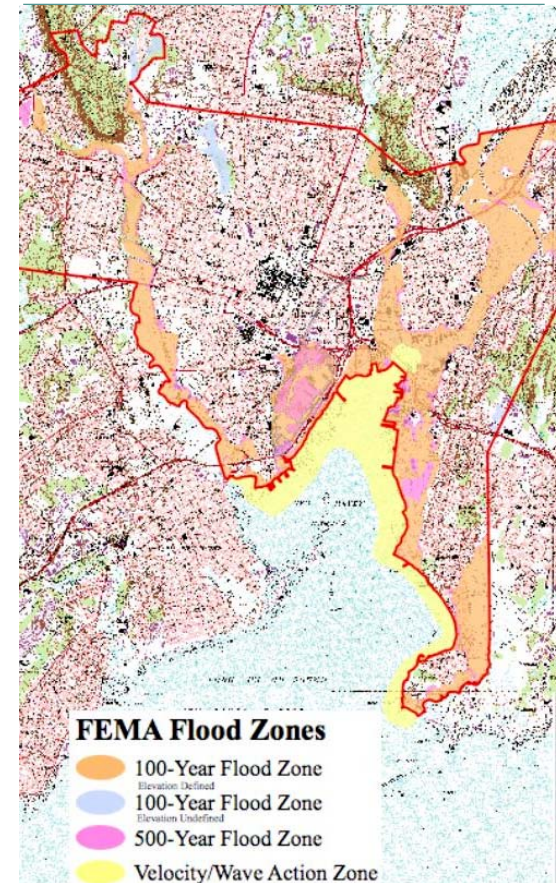
To **assess your flood risk** or **find an insurance agent**, visit www.FloodSmart.gov to view flood maps online, or call 1-866-277-0055

To sign up for the City of New Haven's **Emergency Notification System**, visit tinyurl.com/newhavenalerts

To access more flood information online, visit tinyurl.com/newhavenflood

New Haven Flood Information

For residents: how to stay safe, prepared, and aware of risk



New Haven

City Plan Department

July 2014, Updated November 2023

Safety During A Flood

Nationally, more deaths occur due to flooding each year than from any other thunderstorm or hurricane related hazard. Follow these safety rules to minimize your risk:

- If flooding occurs, **get to higher ground**. Stay away from flood-prone areas, including dips, low spots, valleys, ditches, washes, etc.
- Avoid flooded areas or those with rapid water flow**. Do not attempt to cross a flowing stream. It takes only six inches of fast flowing water to sweep you off your feet.
- Don't allow children to play near high water, storm drains or ditches**. Hidden dangers could lie beneath the water.

- Flooded roads could have significant damage hidden by floodwaters. **NEVER drive through floodwaters or on flooded roads**. If your vehicle stalls, leave it immediately and seek higher ground. Water only two feet deep can float away most automobiles.

- Stay away from power lines and electrical wires**. The number two flood killer after drowning is electrocution. Electrical current travels through water. In the event of flooding in your home, have your electricity turned off.

- Report all downed power lines and obstructions to the New Haven Emergency Communications Center by calling 911**.

- Be **especially cautious at night** when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.

- Monitor local media** for vital weather related information.

Flood Insurance Information

Standard homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage, but because flooding is a real danger, it is important to purchase flood insurance, particularly for people living in flood hazard areas. New Haven participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which means that the NFIP provides New Haven residents in low-, medium-, and high-risk areas with flood insurance options. The City also participates in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) program. New Haven residents and businesses in the SFHA are eligible for a 15% discount on their flood insurance premiums due to the City's Class 7 CRS rating. Check with your flood insurance agent to make sure that you are receiving the correct CRS discount.

How To Prepare

- Private property owners are encouraged to **purchase flood insurance**. More information is provided in this brochure.

- Elevate your home** to the level recommended for its location. Elevated homes allow for storm surge and floodwaters to pass underneath, helping to decrease the damage.

- If your property is located in the floodplain, please be aware that you **shouldn't dump materials** such as grass clippings, waste, lumber, floatable materials, and inoperable motor vehicles; as well as, flammable, explosive, or toxic materials. A plugged channel cannot carry water and when it rains the water can back up or divert it to other areas causing flood damage. **Every piece of trash and debris contributes to flooding**.

- Builders should **check with the City Plan Department before they build** to ensure that they comply with all flood requirements and regulations. Call (203) 946-6380 to confirm.

- Sign up** for the City of New Haven's **Emergency Notification System**, which will be used to notify residents of an impending emergency: tinyurl.com/newhavenalerts

- Heed recommendations to evacuate** in advance of a flood.

- See the **resources listed on the other side** of this pamphlet.

