

An Ounce of Prevention

It is important to plan ahead for a disaster. A flood insurance policy will not go into effect until 30-days after you buy the policy.

- Take inventory of all personal items (including model types, serial numbers, pictures and descriptions).
- Elevate your utilities (e.g. electrical service panel and disconnect air conditioner, water heater, etc.) two or three feet above the base flood elevation.
- If you have a fuel tank, anchor it to a large concrete slab whose weight can resist the force of floodwaters and flotation.
- Install sewer backflow valves to prevent sewage entry into your home during flooding.
- Pay attention to flash flood and river flood watches and warnings issued by the National Weather Service.

You can obtain more information about flood insurance by visiting www.floodsmart.gov or call toll-free at 1.888.379.9531.



Give us a call or email us!

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONSUMER COMPLAINTS
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Consumer and Claims Services Division
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**A CONSUMER'S
GUIDE TO
FLOOD
INSURANCE**





A MESSAGE FROM OUR OFFICE

When your home is flooded, it can lead to financial ruin if you don't have the proper insurance. A basic homeowners' policy won't cover flood damage! Flood insurance is a special policy backed by the federal government with cooperation from local communities and private insurance companies.

Each of West Virginia's 55 counties and 32 major watersheds have been affected by flooding and flooding continues to be the state's most common and widespread natural disaster.

A flood insurance policy is easy to get, affordable and offers invaluable peace of mind. With flood insurance, you know you're covered and when the water rises that peace of mind is helpful. If you have any questions, or need additional information about any type of insurance, please contact The West Virginia Offices of the Insurance Commissioner's Consumer and Claims Services Division at 1.888.TRY.WVIC or 304.558.3386, weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

www.wvinsurance.gov

What is a Flood?

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) defines a flood to be a general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of two or more acres of normally dry land area from:

- Overflow of inland or tidal waters
- Unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any source
- Mudflow
- Collapse or subsidence of land along the shore of a lake or similar body of water

What is Flood Insurance?

Flood insurance is a special policy that is federally backed by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP):

- A standard flood policy will cover structural damage to your home, including damage to your furnace, water heater, air conditioner, floor surfaces (carpeting and tile) and debris clean up.

As a homeowner, you can insure your home up to \$250,000 and its contents up to \$100,000. If you are a renter, you can cover your belongings up to \$100,000. As a non-residential property owner, you can insure your building and its contents up to \$500,000.

In general, a policy does not take effect until 30 days after you purchase flood insurance. So, if the

weather forecast announces a flood alert for your area and you go to purchase coverage, it's already too late. You will not be insured if you buy a policy a few days before a flood.

How Much Does Flood Insurance Cost?

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the average flood insurance policy in West Virginia costs a little more than \$400 a year for about \$100,000 of coverage. The actual cost to you will depend upon where you live and the amount of coverage you choose.

Although flood insurance is relatively inexpensive, most consumers neglect to purchase protection. Preparation is the key to surviving a flood and reducing property damage.

How Can I Buy Flood Insurance?

You can buy NFIP flood insurance directly from your property and casualty insurance agent or insurance company if your community participates in the NFIP.

You can find out if your community participates by visiting the following NFIP web link:
www.fema.gov/fema/csb.shtm.

Your insurance agent or insurance company can also confirm whether flood insurance is available to you and what it would cost.

