



**MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

Be Flood Smart Be Flood Safe

FLOOD SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

March 8 - March 14, 2026



[MASS.GOV/MEMA/FLOODS](https://www.mass.gov/mema/floods)



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Introduction: Flood Preparedness

Communication materials to keep your community safe before, during, and after a flood.



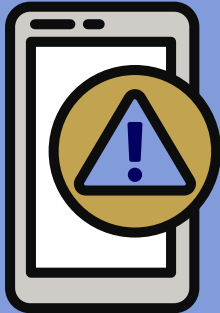
The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) has developed this toolkit to help you share important flood preparedness messages to your community. The toolkit includes key messages, which can be tailored to write local press releases or blog posts, as well as sample social media posts and graphics that can be used or adapted for your community.

Access and Functional Needs Considerations

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- **Language Access:** MEMA has both physical and digital copies of general disaster preparedness flyers translated in seven languages. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) has developed this toolkit to help you share important flood preparedness messages to your community. The toolkit includes key messages, which can be tailored to write local press releases or blog posts, as well as sample social media posts and graphics that can be used or adapted for your community.
 - **Access & Functional Needs:** Be sure to include alternative text for your graphics on social media, and consider that not everyone in your community uses social media. Reaching individuals with access and functional needs is especially important since this population may need to take extra steps to ensure they are prepared for emergencies. Consider reaching out to or posting flood preparedness messaging within the following: places of worship, senior/community centers, housing authorities, public transportation (i.e. bus shelters). For Flood Safety Awareness Week, consider sending a message out through the community alert system if your city/town has one.
 - **Helpful Links:**
 - **Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs**
 - MEMA provides information on how to support individuals with access and functional needs on our website.

Key Messaging

General Preparedness



Stay Informed

- Sign up for your town or city’s emergency alert system
 - Follow your local public safety agencies and emergency management departments on social media
 - Listen to local media outlets, including news and radio stations, to stay up to date.
 - Follow the instructions of local public safety officials.
-



Create a Family Communication Plan

- Establish meeting locations
 - Develop an emergency contact plan
 - Learn how to receive emergency alerts and information
 - Plan how to evacuate
 - Plan how to shelter in place
 - Consider everyone’s needs
 - Practice with your household
-



Flood Specific Family Emergency Plan Information

- Create and review your [family emergency plan](#).
- Have a plan to go to higher ground quickly if necessary.
- If you live or work in a flood zone, [hurricane evacuation zone](#), or an area that is prone to flooding, you should be prepared to [evacuate](#).

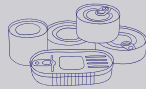
Key Messaging

Having an emergency supply kit is an essential component of personal and family preparedness. Emergency kits should include essentials items that will help sustain you and your family for up to three days in the event you are isolated in your home without power during disaster.

Emergency Kit Checklist



- Water - 1 gallon per person per day for a few days



- Non-perishable food items



- First-Aid Kit



- Battery powered or hand-crank radio and NOAA Weather Radio



- Extra batteries



- Flashlight



- Extra pet supplies



- Personal hygiene items, glasses, and medication(s)



- Copies of important documents and IDs



- Cellphone and charger

Key Messaging

Watch vs. Warning

Flood Watch or Flash Flood Watch

- Flooding or flash flooding in your area is possible. Pay attention to changing weather and flood conditions, and be prepared to move to higher ground.

Flood Warning or Flash Flood Warning


- Flooding is occurring or about to occur. Avoid low lying areas and if necessary, evacuate.

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Watch vs. Warning

Flooding is POSSIBLE	Flooding is EXPECTED
Be Prepared	Take Action
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check for forecast updates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Avoid low-lying areas
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepare to move to higher ground	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use extra caution if driving
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stay weather ready	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check forecast updates
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stay weather ready

#FloodSafetyMA
mass.gov/mema



Key Messaging

What to do...

Before a Flood

- Find out whether your property is in a flood-prone or high-risk area. Explore the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) flood maps.
- Contact your local Emergency Management Director to find out if your home or workplace is downstream from a dam and learn more about your community's risk of flooding.
- Make a record of your personal property by taking photos or videos of your belongings. Store these records in a safe place.
- Prepare your home for flooding.**
- Flood losses are not typically covered under renter and homeowner's insurance policies. Consider purchasing flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Flood insurance is available in most communities whether or not your building is in a flood-prone area, but there is a 30-day waiting period before it goes into effect.

Key Messaging

What to do...

During a Flood Watch

- Stay Informed:
 - Listen to a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio or to a local news station for the latest information.
 - Follow instructions given by public safety officials.
- Be ready to move to higher ground, if necessary.
- Consider postponing outdoor activities.
- Tie down or bring in outdoor objects (patio furniture, children's toys, trash cans, etc.) that could be swept away or damaged during flooding.
- Consider unplugging sensitive electronic equipment before flooding occurs. But, do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.
- Elevate items stored in your basement to prevent damage. If you have a sump pump, check that it is working.
- Consider clearing street catch basins to prevent or reduce street flooding.
- Avoid camping or parking along streams, rivers, creeks, or other areas prone to flooding during heavy rainfall. These areas can flood rapidly and with little warning.

Key Messaging

What to do...

During a Flood Warning

- Move immediately to higher ground or stay on high ground.
- Continue to check the media for emergency information.
- Follow instructions from public safety officials. If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- If you must evacuate your home, take only essential items and bring your pets if safe to do so.
- If you must evacuate or are traveling during flooding, remember:
- Do not walk through flowing water. Most drownings occur during flash floods. Six inches of swiftly moving water can knock you off of your feet.
- Remember the phrase “Turn Around, Don’t Drown!” Don’t drive through flooded roads. Cars can be swept away in only two feet of moving water. If your vehicle is trapped in rapidly moving water, stay in the vehicle. If the water is rising inside the vehicle, seek refuge on the roof.
- Do not drive around road barriers. Roads and bridges may be washed out or structurally unsound.
- If told to shelter in place, listen to local television or radio for updates. Conditions may change quickly, so be prepared to evacuate to a shelter or a neighbor’s home if necessary.

Key Messaging

What to do...

After a Flood

- Continue to monitor the media for emergency information.
- Follow instructions from public safety officials.
- If you have evacuated, return home only when authorities say it is safe to do so.
- Call 9-1-1 to report emergencies including downed power lines and gas leaks.
- Call 2-1-1 to obtain shelter locations and other disaster information.
- Be a good neighbor. Check on family, friends, and neighbors, especially the elderly, those who live alone, those with medical conditions, and those who may need extra help.

Key Messaging

What to do...

After a Flood - Safety

- Stay away from downed utility wires. Always assume a downed power line is live. Electrocution is also a serious danger in floods as electrical currents can travel through water.
- “Turn Around, Don’t Drown!” - Don’t drive through flooded roads.
- Stay out of damaged buildings and away from affected areas or roads until authorities deem them safe.
- If your power is out, report outages to your utility company and follow our power outage safety tips.
- Look before you step, particularly watch out for debris and slippery ground.
- Listen to news reports to learn if your water supply is safe to drink. Until local authorities say your water supply is safe, boil water for at least one minute before drinking or using it for cooking.
- Throw away food (including canned items) that has come in contact with floodwaters. Don’t eat food from flooded gardens. Throw away any refrigerated food that was not kept at temperatures below 40 °F for more than two hours or that has an unusual odor, color, or texture.

Key Messaging

What to do...

After a Flood - For Your Home

- Check your home for damage:
- Never touch electrical equipment while wet or standing in water.
- Have wells checked for contamination.
- Have damaged septic tanks or leaching systems repaired as soon as possible.
- Clean and disinfect anything that got wet. Wear appropriate protective gear when cleaning flooded floors and walls. Dispose of carpeting, mattresses, and upholstered furniture
- Document your damage by taking pictures/videos and contact your insurance company.
- Avoid entering or walking through flood waters.
- Remove and replace any drywall or other paneling that has been under water. Use a moisture meter to make sure that wooden studs and framing are dry before replacing the drywall. Mold growth in hidden places is a significant health hazard.
- Consider using professional cleaning and repair services before attempting to repair flood-damaged property.

Captions & Graphics



Below are examples of social media posts that can be used to prepare your community for flooding events. Included with each post is an infographic that you can use on your own social media or as inspiration to create your own. Engage your audience further by adding emojis and linking information from local resources.

Visit the following link for a library of Flood Safety infographics:

[English and Spanish Infographics Library.](#)

Know what #FloodSafety terms mean: Flood Watch = flooding is possible - be prepared! Flood Warning = flooding is occurring or will occur - take action! <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Before a Flood

#Flooding is the most common hazard in Massachusetts. Some floods develop slowly, while flash floods can occur shortly after a storm. Floods can be life threatening & cause major property damage. Learn how to prepare your family & property for a flood: <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

The entire Massachusetts coastline is at risk of coastal flooding which can range from splash over at shore roads to major structural property damage. On average, MA has experienced 6 coastal flooding events per year over last decade. Flood safety tips: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/noreaster-coastal-storm-safety-tips>

Nearly every community in Massachusetts can and has experienced inland flooding from river flooding, urban drainage flooding, or other types of flooding. On average, MA has experienced a substantial flood event once every 3 years. Flood safety tips: <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Learn if your property is in a flood-prone or high-risk area by viewing the FEMA flood maps. Contact your local Emergency Management Director to learn more about your community's risk of flooding. Flood safety preparedness: <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

If you live in an area that may #flood and may need an accessible transportation option to evacuate

- Plan with family, neighbors, friends to assist.
- Contact local public safety officials to make them aware of your needs.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/emergency-preparedness-for-individuals-with-disabilities-and-access-and-functional>

Prior to a #flood, create and review your family emergency plan.

- Have a plan to go to higher ground quickly if necessary.
- If you live or work in a flood zone, hurricane evacuation zone, or an area prone to flooding, be prepared to evacuate. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Doing renovations? Tips for properties in areas that may #flood:

- Elevate a furnace, water heater, & electric panel to higher floors
- Install a sump pump
- Install check valves in sewer lines to prevent floodwater from backing up into your home. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Prior to a #flood, prepare your home:

- Elevate items stored in the basement and other low-lying flood prone areas to minimize damage from flooding.
- If you have a sump pump, check that it is functioning properly. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Whether you are inside or outside of a flood prone area & whether you are a homeowner, renter, or business owner, you can purchase a flood insurance policy from the National Flood Insurance Program. Call your insurance agent to get more info <https://www.mass.gov/guides/floodplain-management>

Most homeowners' and renters' insurance does not cover flood damage. Learn more about flood insurance at <http://FloodSmart.gov> #PrepareNow

During a Flood Watch or Flash Flood Watch

A Flood Watch means be prepared – flooding is possible

- Check for forecast updates
- Prepare to move to higher ground
- Stay weather ready

<http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Before a #flood: Tie down or bring in outdoor objects (patio furniture, children's toys, trash cans, etc.) that could be swept away or damaged during flooding. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Before a #flood: Unplug sensitive electronic equipment before flooding occurs. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Before a #flood:

- Elevate items stored in the basement and other low-lying flood prone areas to minimize damage from flooding.
- If you have a sump pump, check that it is functioning properly.

<http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Before a #flood: Clear street catch basins and storm drains to prevent or reduce street flooding. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

During a #flood watch: Consider postponing outdoor activities. Avoid camping or parking along streams, rivers, creeks, or other areas prone to flooding during heavy rainfall. These areas can flood rapidly and with little warning. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

During a Flood Warning or Flash Flood Warning

A Flood Warning means take action – flooding is expected

- Move to higher ground immediately
- Use extra caution if driving
- Check forecast updates
- Stay weather ready

<http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

During a #flood warning:

- Get to higher ground.
- Do not drive or walk into water.
- Turn around, don't drown!

<http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

During a #flood warning: Follow instructions from public safety officials. If told to evacuate, do so immediately. If you must evacuate your home, take only essential items and bring your pets. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

During a #flood: Do not drive or walk into water. It only takes 6 inches of swiftly moving water to knock you off your feet! <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Turn around, don't drown!

- Never drive into a flooded roadway. Cars can be swept away in 2 ft. of moving water.
- Do not drive around road barriers. Roads and bridges may be washed out or structurally unsound. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

After a Flood

Turn around, don't drown!

- Never drive into a flooded roadway. Cars can be swept away in 2 ft. of moving water.
- Do not drive around road barriers. Roads and bridges may be washed out or structurally unsound. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

If you have evacuated, return home only when authorities say it is safe to do so. Check with local officials or call 2-1-1 to find shelter locations and other disaster information. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Be a good neighbor. Check on family, friends, and neighbors, especially the elderly, those who live alone, those with medical conditions and those who may need additional assistance. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Flooded homes can be dangerous

- Stay away from electrical utility equipment after a storm or if it is wet to prevent being electrocuted.
- Get a professional to check for loose wires, mold and hidden damage before re-entering. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

If your home or property experienced #flood damage, take photos or videos to document the damage and contact your insurance company. Learn more about how to recover after a disaster: <http://bit.ly/2CvEECF>

Clean and disinfect anything that got wet during a #flood. Take precautions. Wear appropriate protective equipment such as gloves, safety glasses, and face masks. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Flood Insurance

Do you know your flood risk? Check out [FEMA's Map Service Center](#) to learn if you live in or near a flood zone. Remember, low risk doesn't mean no risk. It can flood anywhere it can rain!

Turn around don't drown! Never drive on flooded roads. 12 inches of water can take over a car and 6 inches of water can sweep you away.

Are you prepared- just 1 inch of water can cause up to \$25k in damage to your home.

Better protect yourself and your home from flooding. <https://www.reducefloodrisk.org/>

Basement flooding- what's covered:

<https://agents.floodsmart.gov/sites/default/files/fema-nfip-basement-flooding-infographic-10-2021.pdf>

Get ready with S.E.T. – Store documents, elevate utilities, toss debris.

<https://agents.floodsmart.gov/articles/get-ready-getting-set>

Did you know that most property insurance policies do not cover flood damage. In most cases, flood insurance must be purchased separately to cover damage directly caused by a flood. Learn more at <https://www.floodsmart.gov/> or <https://www.floodsmart.gov/es>

Spanish Captions

Conozca lo que significan los términos de #FloodSafety: Vigilancia ante inundaciones = las inundaciones son posibles, ¡prepárese! Alerta de inundaciones = se están produciendo o se producirán inundaciones, ¡actúe!
<http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Antes de una inundación

Las #inundaciones son el peligro más común en Massachusetts. Algunas inundaciones se desarrollan lentamente, mientras que las inundaciones repentinas pueden ocurrir poco después de una tormenta. Las inundaciones pueden ser mortales y causar daños materiales importantes. Conozca cómo preparar a su familia y sus bienes para una inundación: <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Toda la costa de Massachusetts está en riesgo de inundaciones costeras, que pueden ir desde inundaciones en carreteras costeras hasta importantes daños estructurales a la propiedad. En promedio, Massachusetts ha experimentado seis inundaciones costeras al año durante la última década. Consejos de seguridad contra inundaciones: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/noreaster-coastal-storm-safety-tips>

Casi todas las comunidades de Massachusetts pueden experimentar, y de hecho lo han hecho, inundaciones tierra adentro causadas por inundaciones fluviales, inundaciones de drenaje urbano u otros tipos de inundaciones. En promedio, Massachusetts ha experimentado una inundación importante una vez cada tres años. Consejos de seguridad contra inundaciones: <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Consulte los mapas de inundaciones de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA) para saber si su propiedad se encuentra en una zona propensa a inundaciones o de alto riesgo. Comuníquese con su Dirección de Gestión de Emergencias local para obtener más información sobre el riesgo de inundación de su comunidad. Preparación para inundaciones: <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Si vive en un área que puede #inundarse y puede necesitar una opción de transporte accesible para evacuar:

- Planifique con familiares, vecinos y amigos para que ayudarse.
- Comuníquese con los funcionarios de seguridad pública locales para informarles sobre sus necesidades.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/emergency-preparedness-for-individuals-with-disabilities-and-access-and-functional>

Antes de una #inundación, elabore y revise su plan de emergencia familiar.

- Tenga un plan para ir a un terreno más alto rápidamente si es necesario.
- Si vive o trabaja en una zona de inundación, zona de evacuación por huracanes o un área propensa a inundaciones, prepárese para evacuar. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

¿Está haciendo reformas? Consejos para propiedades en zonas con riesgo de #inundaciones:

- Eleve un horno, un calentador de agua y un panel eléctrico a pisos más altos.
- Instale una bomba de sumidero.
- Instale válvulas de retención en las líneas de alcantarillado para evitar que el agua de la inundación regrese a su hogar. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Antes de una #inundación, prepare su hogar:

- Eleve los artículos guardados en el sótano y otras áreas bajas propensas a inundaciones para minimizar los daños.
- Si tiene una bomba de sumidero, verifique que funcione correctamente.

<http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Ya sea que se encuentre dentro o fuera de una zona propensa a inundaciones, que sea propietario de una vivienda, inquilino o dueño de un negocio, puede adquirir una póliza de seguro contra inundaciones del Programa Nacional de Seguros contra Inundaciones. Llame a su agente de seguros para obtener más información. <https://www.mass.gov/guides/floodplain-management>

La mayoría de los seguros para propietarios e inquilinos no cubren daños por inundaciones. Obtenga más información sobre el seguro contra inundaciones en <http://FloodSmart.gov> #PrepáreseAhora

Durante un aviso de vigilancia de inundación o de vigilancia de inundación repentina

Un aviso de vigilancia de inundación significa que debe prepararse: es posible que haya inundaciones.

- Revise los pronósticos del clima
- Prepárese para ir a un terreno más alto
- Prepárese para el clima

<http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Antes de una #inundación: ate o guarde los objetos que estén afuera (muebles de patio, juguetes de niños, botes de basura, etc.) que puedan ser arrastrados o dañados durante una inundación. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Antes de una #inundación: desconecte los equipos electrónicos sensibles antes de que se produzca una inundación. No toque aparatos eléctricos si se ha mojado o está de pie sobre agua. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Antes de una #inundación:

- Eleve los artículos guardados en el sótano y otras áreas bajas propensas a inundaciones para minimizar los daños.
- Si tiene una bomba de sumidero, verifique que funcione correctamente.

<http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Antes de una #inundación: limpie los sumideros de las calles y los desagües pluviales para prevenir o reducir las inundaciones en las calles. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Antes de una #inundación: limpie los sumideros de las calles y los desagües pluviales para prevenir o reducir las inundaciones en las calles.
<http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Durante una alerta de #inundación: considere posponer las actividades al aire libre. Evite acampar o estacionarse junto a arroyos, ríos, riachuelos u otras zonas propensas a inundaciones durante lluvias intensas. Estas zonas pueden inundarse rápidamente y sin previo aviso. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Durante una alerta de inundación o una alerta de inundación repentina

Una advertencia de inundación significa que debe actuar: se esperan inundaciones.

- Muévase a un terreno más alto inmediatamente.
- Maneje con más precaución de lo normal.
- Revise los pronósticos del clima.
- Prepárese para el clima.

<http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Durante una alerta de #inundación:

- Vaya a un terreno más alto.
- No conduzca ni camine dentro del agua.
- ¡Dé la vuelta, no se sumerja!

<http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Durante una alerta de #inundación: siga las instrucciones de las autoridades de seguridad pública. Si le indican que debe evacuar, hágalo de inmediato. Si debe evacuar su hogar, lleve solo lo esencial y llévese a sus mascotas <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Durante una #inundación: no conduzca ni camine sobre el agua. ¡Apenas 6 pulgadas de agua en movimiento rápido pueden derribar a una persona! <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

¡Dé la vuelta, no se sumerja!

- Nunca conduzca en una carretera inundada. Los vehículos pueden ser arrastrados por una corriente de agua de 2 pies.
- No conduzca cerca de las barreras viales. Las carreteras y puentes podrían estar inundados o presentar problemas estructurales. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Tras una inundación

Durante una alerta de inundación o una alerta de inundación repentina

¡Dé la vuelta, no se sumerja!

- Nunca conduzca en una carretera inundada. Los vehículos pueden ser arrastrados por una corriente de agua de 2 pies.
- No conduzca cerca de las barreras viales. Las carreteras y puentes podrían estar inundados o presentar problemas estructurales. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Si ha evacuado, regrese a casa solo cuando las autoridades indiquen que es seguro hacerlo. Consulte con las autoridades locales o llame al 2-1-1 para encontrar refugios y obtener más información sobre desastres. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Sea un buen vecino. Esté pendiente de sus familiares, amigos y vecinos, especialmente de las personas mayores, los que viven solos, quienes tengan afecciones médicas y quienes puedan necesitar ayuda adicional. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Las viviendas inundadas pueden ser peligrosas

- Aléjese de los equipos de servicios eléctricos después de una tormenta; especialmente si se ha mojado, para evitar electrocutarse.
- Haga que un profesional revise si hay cables sueltos, moho y daños ocultos antes de volver a ingresar. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>

Si su casa o propiedad sufrió daños por una inundación, tome fotos o videos para documentar los daños y contacte a su compañía de seguros. Obtenga más información sobre cómo recuperarse después de un desastre: <http://bit.ly/2CvEECF>

Limpie y desinfecte todo lo que se haya mojado durante una inundación. Tome precauciones. Use equipo de protección adecuado, como guantes, gafas de seguridad y mascarillas. <http://www.mass.gov/mema/floods>