

Village of Great Neck Estates

FLOOD AWARENESS BULLETIN

Dear Neighbors,

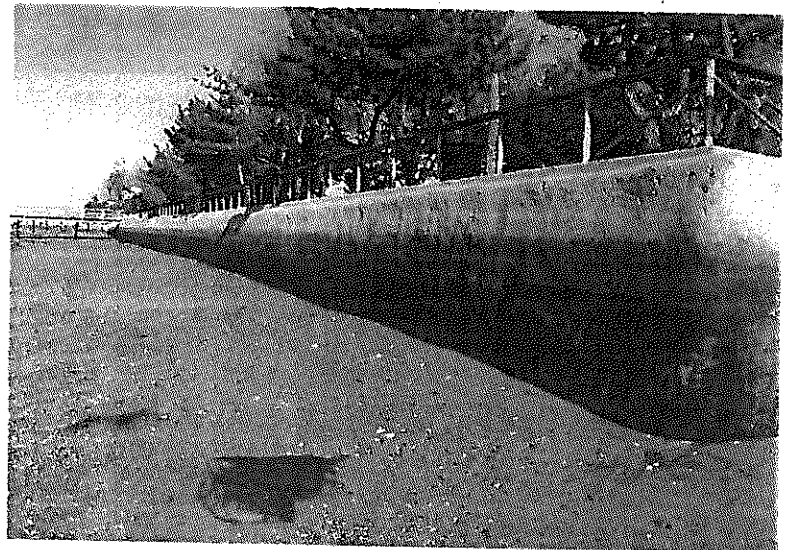
In 2008, the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) issued new preliminary floodplain maps to the Village of Great Neck Estates that reflect the current flood risks to homeowners. These Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) represent flood zone boundaries of a community.

FEMA has set up the Community Rating System (CRS), a point system that helps to reduce flood insurance premiums and rewards communities that undertake floodplain activities beyond the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). As a participant in the NFIP, the Village of Great Neck Estates has started an outreach program in an attempt to have the flood insurance rates reduced Village wide and in order to address any problems within the flood zone.

This newsletter will provide information that will protect your home and your family. We kindly ask that you read through the material; it provides tips on emergency planning, flood proofing and other safety measures you can take now so that you are prepared in advance of a flood event.

Sincerely,

David A. Fox
Mayor, Village of Great Neck Estates



SPECIAL TIPS FOR THOSE LIVING IN THE SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA

1. Great Neck Estates participates in the Emergency Notification System. Swift 911™ transmits a message to every home and business within a targeted area to warn of an impending storm flood, evacuation or other emergency situation.

2. If you don't have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Your regular homeowner's insurance policy doesn't cover damage from floods. However, because the Village of Great Neck Estates participates in the National Flood Insurance Program, you can purchase a separate flood insurance policy. This insurance is backed by the Federal Government and is available to everyone. If you have a mortgage, you must have this insurance. For map information contact the Building Department at 482-8283.

3. Flood protection assistance is available from the Building Department. They can help you with permit requirements, map determinations, lowest level requirements, site visits and plan reviews in order for you to decrease the potential flood damage to your property. Additionally, flyers on retrofitting and how to reduce wind and flood damage are available at the Building Department.

4. The Great Neck Public Library has FEMA publications at the reference desk.



DRAINAGE SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

The drainage system is maintained by the Village of Great Neck Estates Department of Public Works. If your property is located near a storm drain, make sure that it is not clogged with leaves and other debris as streets cannot drain properly when drains are clogged with leaves and other debris as streets cannot drain properly when drains are clogged. It is important that you report any kind of dumping or other conditions which are interfering with the proper functioning of this system. Report all incidents to the Village of Great Neck Estates, Department of Public Works and the Building Department. Violators will be subject to fines.

STORM TIPS

1. Sign up for the Village of Great Neck Estates Swift 911™ Emergency Notification System.
2. Establish a personal emergency plan. Make sure all members of your household are familiar with it, including your children. Plan for your special family members; many Red Cross shelters will not allow pets. Monitor flooding patterns in your neighborhood in order to plan the best evacuation route.
3. Be ready to evacuate at least 18 hours before the storm is expected to hit. Pre-storm tides and flooding can cut off routes of escape.
4. Make sure your vehicle has a full tank of gas.
5. Prepare an emergency supply kit; this should include an adequate supply of water since local water systems may be damaged. Have a supply of non-perishable foods such as canned meat or fish, crackers, cheese, peanut butter, special diet foods, juice, a manual can opener, battery operated radio, flashlights and a fresh supply of batteries.
6. Prepare a first aid kit which includes a 1 – 2 week supply of your prescription medication.
7. Prepare your property. If you have to evacuate, cut off all electrical circuits at the main. Shut off the water service and gas valves at each appliance. If possible, move appliances and furniture to a higher level. Secure outdoor furniture and structures so that they don't become deadly missiles in hurricane winds. Secure boats and floats with additional lines. Lock the doors to your home or business.
8. Evaluate what important papers you should take with you such as medical records, ID, etc. If you have been evacuated, you may need ID in order to return to your property.
9. Businesses must also establish a plan and fully train their employees. Those with special conditions or hazards must be fully advised of potential problems so that we can safeguard lives, protect businesses and protect the community at large. Evaluate your plan yearly and update accordingly.
10. After the storm has past, many dangers may be left behind. The most important thing is to be alert and follow any instructions that are given to you by emergency personnel.
11. Since drowning is the number one cause of deaths during a flood, you should be very careful walking through flooded areas. Six inches of flowing water can knock you off your feet. If you are in standing water, use a stick to help you keep your footing. Additionally, the danger of electrocution by downed wires is always present.
12. Do not drive through flooded areas. More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. Don't drive around barriers; they are there for a reason. It might look safe but it wouldn't be there unless some hazard is present.
13. Stay away from power lines and electrical wires. The number two flood killer after drowning is electrocution. Electrical currents can travel through water. Report any downed wires to the power authority.
14. Look before you step. After a flood, the ground and floor are covered with debris including broken glass, nails, etc. Use caution. Muddy floors and stairs can be slippery.
15. Be alert for gas leaks. Don't smoke or use candles, lanterns or open flame, especially in areas which have not been well ventilated.
16. If your building or home has been declared unsafe or if you have been advised not to enter it for any reason you must comply.
17. Most people who live in flood prone areas are aware of the threat of flooding since it often occurs during some moon tides. If you live in the flood zone but have never experienced flooding, don't feel that these warnings are not for you. We can save lives and properties by being prepared. Even if your property doesn't flood you still might have to evacuate if public services such as water, electric, gas etc. cannot be provided.

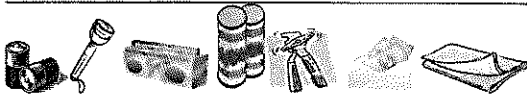
PROPERTY PROTECTION METHODS

1. Most houses can be raised so that the lowest floor is above the flood protection level. The Building Department can show you examples of homes (large and small) which have been raised.

2. Install floodwalls which are properly designed to resist water pressure and are of sufficient height. This application works best where floodwaters do not exceed 3 feet.

3. Dry flood proofing means sealing a building to keep floodwaters out. Walls are coated, openings such as windows, doors, etc. are closed permanently or they are temporarily sealed with a removable shield or sandbags.

4. Wet flood proofing means modifying a building so that the floodwaters will cause only minimum damage to the building and contents. Building materials below base flood level are removed and are replaced to allow floodwaters into the building to counter the pressure on the outside walls.



IMPORTANT DO's.....

1) Do keep a battery-operated radio tuned to WGBB (1240AM), WHLI (1600AM), or the NOAA weather stations (162.55 or 162.73) during inclement weather. Check local television news stations including News 12 and Channel 55 for weather alerts.

2) Do prepare a family emergency plan and include the phone number of a family member or friend living outside the Village of Great Neck Estates who will be able to relay messages between you and your immediate relatives in the event of an evacuation order. Make sure every member of the family knows the plan and all important phone numbers. Practice the plan often, especially with young children, in order to avoid fear and panic during a real emergency.

3) Do put together an emergency supply kit that contains a battery-operated radio, flashlights, canned food along with a can opener, bottled water, blankets and plenty of fresh batteries, and cash in case you have to leave your home.

4) Do include a first aid kit with your non-perishable items that contains at least a one-week supply of prescription medications for each member of your family.

5. Make sure that the professional you hire to do your retrofitting project has demonstrated an expertise in this type of work. Building permits must be obtained prior to all work. Be further advised the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requires that if the cost of reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition or other improvements to a building equals or exceeds 50% of the building's market value, then the building must meet the same construction requirements as a new building. Substantially damaged buildings must also be brought up to the same standards (e.g. a residence damaged so that the cost of repairs equals or exceeds 50% of the building's value before it was damaged, must be elevated above the base flood elevation.)

5) Do follow the evacuation orders immediately when issued by the police, firefighters, or other emergency response personnel.

6) Do have your important papers secured in a bank safety deposit box or other protected place.

7) Do prepare your home in the event of an evacuation. Be sure all backyard furniture is either stored or firmly secured.

8) Do have a special emergency plan if you are a business owner. Remember in the event of a major emergency most employees will want to rush home to take care of their own families. Take this fact into consideration when formulating your emergency plan. Schedule frequent drills to ensure against panic and confusion.

...and DON'T'S

9) Don't return to the area before the evacuation order is lifted.

10) Don't walk or drive through flooded areas. Drowning is the number one cause of deaths during floods. More people drown in their cars than anywhere else.

11) Don't touch, walk or drive over downed power lines or electrical wires. Report any downed lines to the Village of Great Neck Estates Police Dept., the Electric Dept., the Emergency Management Office, the Building Dept., or emergency management personnel.

IS MY PROPERTY IN THE FLOOD ZONE?

The map on the back of this brochure shows the section of the Village of Great Neck Estates that has been designated a special flood hazard area by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. If you live in this area, you are probably aware of the threat of flooding during various weather conditions, as well as the phases of the moon and the tides.

If you live in the flood zone and have never experienced a major flood, please take note of these important suggestions.

Building Dept. personnel are available to assist you during business hours, 9:00a.m. to 4:30p.m. They will help you with permit requirements, map determinations, lowest level requirements, site visits and plan reviews to help you reduce the risk of flood damage to your property.

INSURANCE PROTECTION

This outreach project is part of the program that has granted the Village of Great Neck Estates residents a discount on flood insurance. The current discount for property owners has been increased by 10%.

If you are not carrying flood insurance, speak to your insurance agent. Your regular homeowners insurance policy will not cover damage from floods. However, because the Village of Great Neck Estates participates in the National Flood Insurance Program, you may purchase a separate flood insurance policy.

This insurance is backed by the federal government and is available to everyone. If you have a mortgage, you must have this insurance. For flood map information, contact the Building Dept. at (516) 482-8283.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP PREVENT FLOODING

The Village's street drainage system is maintained by the Dept. of Public Works. Please report any kind of dumping or other conditions that are interfering with the proper functioning of this system. Violators may face fines up to \$1,000. If your property is located near a storm drain, make sure that it is not clogged with leaves and other debris. The roads and streets will not drain properly if these drains are clogged.

PROTECTING YOUR PROPERTY

Many homes in the frequently flooded areas can be elevated so that the lowest floor is raised above the flood protection level. The Village of Great Neck Estate's Building Dept. will help you determine if this is feasible with your property.

The staff will show you photos of homes that have been elevated (both large and small) and will provide a list of contractors experienced in the elevation of existing houses.

Installation of floodwalls that are properly designed to resist water pressure and are of sufficient height can also decrease flood damage. This method works best where the floodwaters do not exceed 3 feet.

Dry flood proofing means sealing a building to keep floodwaters out. Walls are coated, openings such as windows, doors, etc. are closed permanently or they are temporarily sealed with removable shields or sandbags.

Wet flood proofing means modifying a building so that floodwaters will cause only minimal damage to the building and its contents.

Be sure the professional you hire to do your retrofitting project has experience in this type of work. Building permits must be obtained prior to beginning any work on the property. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requires that if the cost of reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvements to a building equals or exceeds 50% of the building's market value, then the building must meet the same construction requirements as a new structure.

Substantially damaged buildings must also be brought up to the same standards, (in other words, a residence damaged so that the cost of repairs equals or exceeds 50% of the building's value before it was damaged must be elevated above the base flood elevation).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Members of the Building Dept. staff have been specially trained at the Federal Emergency Institute on methods of retrofitting existing property from floodwater and wind damage. If you have any questions or concerns about your property, please stop in and speak to someone and pick up a flyer on the prevention of storm damage.

The Great Neck Library also offers information and reference material on retrofitting, how to read a flood map or a flood insurance rate map, and other FEMA publications are at the reference desk.

For more details or to provide comments, contact the Building Dept. at (516) 482-8283.

You may also visit the Coastal Flood Monitoring Station @http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ny/nwis/uv?site_no=01313521.

COASTAL FLOOD MONITORING STATION

The coastal areas of Long Island and metropolitan New York are highly vulnerable to tidal flooding. Timely evacuation of people from flood-threatened areas in advance of approaching hurricanes and nor'easters (north east coastal storms) requires adequate flood-warning time. The need for immediate information on coastal flooding has prompted the USGS, in partnership with the National Weather Service, to establish a system of near real-time coastal flood-monitoring stations.

The shelter at each coastal flood-monitoring site contains equipment that records and stores data on the tide stage (water level) several times each hour. For some sites there also is equipment that collects weather data such as precipitation, wind speed and direction, air and water temperature, relative humidity, and barometric pressure. Information collected at each monitoring site is automatically transmitted to the USGS office by telephone, satellite, or both. USGS personnel visit each site regularly to verify the accuracy of data and maintain data collection and transmission equipment.

Near real-time data collected at each coastal flood-monitoring station is available over the internet at ny.usgs.gov. This information could help speed the evacuation of flood-threatened areas and minimize disruption in flood-spared communities. It also provides the ability to monitor storm-tide levels in near real-time, helps improve the accuracy of coastal flood predictions, and generates data at sea-level rise.

Operated by the
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
In Cooperation with the
VILLAGE OF GREAT NECK ESTATES