

City of Conway

Advice to Flooded Property Owners

1. Read through the book *Repairing Your Flooded Home*. Copies are available free at City Hall and Fire Station #2 on Country Club Drive.
2. Read through the City of Conway handout, *Repairing Flooded Buildings*, October 5. This lists all the rules for cleaning out, repairing and rebuilding flooded homes and businesses.
3. If your building was damaged and you have not had a building inspector look at it, call the Building Department at 248-1760.
4. You can proceed with cleaning up, even if an inspector has not been by. To clean up, do the following:
 - 4.1. Remove and throw away the following items if they got wet:
 - ductwork
 - carpeting and carpet pads
 - sheetrock
 - insulation
 - particle board, pressboard, Masonite, and similar wood composition products
 - wallpaper over plaster
 - all electrical outlets and switches that are below the high water line.
 - 4.2. Hose out the crawlspace and other flooded areas building to remove the mud as explained on pages 9 - 10 of *Repairing Your Flooded Home*. Clean all exposed surfaces with a disinfectant (see Step 6 of *Repairing Your Flooded Home*).
 - 4.3. Allow air to flow around the bare studs and joists so they can dry out. You will not be able to install floor covering, insulation or sheetrock until the wood is sufficiently dry. The City building inspector will have a meter that will test whether the wood is dry enough. It must have a less than 19% moisture reading. A dehumidifier can help this process if you have a generator or other outside source of electricity.
5. If you have had an inspector by, he left a colored placard on your building. Three kinds of placards were used:
 - 5.1. If you have a red placard, it says “unsafe structure.” This means that:
 1. The electricity must be turned off and kept off until the electrical, heating and air conditioning systems are repaired. You will need to apply for a building permit for this work.
 2. You cannot move back into the building, but the building inspector may allow you to proceed with cleanup.

3. The red placard does **not** mean that your building is “substantially damaged.” It does **not** mean that your building will be bought out by the City. The red placard is a safety warning.
 4. Once the electrician has made the repairs, call for an inspection. If the building passes this inspection, you will be given a yellow “limited entry” placard.
- 5.2. If you have a yellow placard, it says “limited entry.” This means that:
1. It is OK to clean out the building and remove the sheetrock, insulation, damaged flooring, etc.
 2. You can have the power turned on.
 3. You need to apply for a building permit before you can install new flooring, sheetrock, etc.,
 4. You cannot move back into the building until this work is done and a building inspector gives you a certificate of occupancy.
 5. See sections 3 and 7 in the City of Conway handout, *Repairing Flooded Buildings*.
- 5.3. If you have a green placard, it says “inspected.” This means that:
1. Your building suffered minimal damage and you can proceed to clean it up.
 2. If water got to your furnace or electrical system, you should have them checked by a licensed contractor.
 3. You do not need a building permit to move back in.
 4. Your building is not “substantially damaged.”
6. Read the four page “Residential Substantial Damage Estimator” report for your property.
- 6.1. This report was prepared in order to determine if your building was substantially damaged. It does not affect your insurance claim or disaster assistance. It will help you or your contractor decide what repairs are needed.
 - 6.2. The report itemizes the cost to replace the items damaged by the flood. These costs are totaled as “total estimated damages” at the bottom of page 3 and “computed damages” on page 4.
 - 6.3. The “computed damages” are compared with the Horry County Tax Assessor’s statement of your building’s value. A review by a FEMA appraiser concluded that the Tax

Assessor's assessed value is close to the true market value of your building. The value of your land and accessory buildings is not included.

6.4. The "total estimated damages" is divided by the "tax assessed value." The result is a percentage listed at the bottom of page 1 and page 4 as "percent damaged."

6.5. If the "percent damaged" is greater than 50%, then your building has been determined to be "substantially damaged." If the number is less than 50%, then there are no special flood protection requirements. You still need to meet all the regular building code requirements.

7. If your building *is* substantially damaged:

7.1. You will have to bring your building up to the flood protection requirements. There are three ways this can be done:

1. Elevate your building so the top of the lowest finished floor is two feet above the high water line from this flood.
2. Move your building to a site outside the floodplain.
3. Demolish your building and build a new one that is elevated two feet above the high water line from this flood.

7.2. There are two alternatives to meeting this flood protection requirement:

1. The Flood Mitigation Planning Committee is recommending that the City apply for funding to pay for 75% of the fair market value of the building and property for each substantially damaged building. If the funding is received, you can choose to sell your property to the City. See below for more details.
2. You can appeal the substantial damage determination by presenting evidence that either your building is worth more than the tax assessed value or it costs less to repair the damage than the amount shown in the "Residential Substantial Damage Estimator" report.

— The appeal is submitted to the City's Construction Board of Appeals.

— You will need either at least two itemized estimates of the cost to repair and reconstruct the building to its before damaged condition prepared and signed by contractors licensed to do business in the City of Conway and/or

— At least one appraisal of the building's market value prepared and signed by a professional property appraiser experienced in Horry County.

8. If your building *is not* substantially damaged, then there are no special flood protection requirements.

- 8.1. You still need to meet all the regular building code requirements. See sections 3 and 7 in the City of Conway handout, *Repairing Flooded Buildings*.
- 8.2. You are encouraged to include floodproofing or retrofitting measures in your repairs. These could include:
 1. Move your electrical box to a level above the high water mark.
 2. Move your furnace, air conditioner and ductwork to a higher level. If there's no more room in your crawlspace, consider replacing the system with one in the attic where it will be high and dry.
 3. If your building is on a slab foundation, look into "dry floodproofing." This involves putting a sealant on the walls and preparing shields to be put across the openings when the next flood comes.
 4. For other ideas, see Chapters 6 and 7 in *Homeowner's Guide to Retrofitting - Six Ways to Protect Your House From Flooding*, Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA 312, 1998.
- 8.3. You may be able to receive financial assistance for these voluntary flood protection measures from one of two disaster assistance programs. See the handout "Mitigation Financial Assistance" for more information on these:
 1. FEMA's Emergency Home Repairs
 2. Small Business Administration 20% mitigation loan
9. The Flood Mitigation Planning Committee is recommending that the City apply for funding to pay for 75% of the fair market value of the building and property for each substantially damaged building.
 - 9.1. We will not know until December 15 if the funds are available for this project. It will take a few more months to process formal applications and paperwork before any offers are made.
 - 9.2. If the funding is received, the following would happen:
 1. A property appraiser would prepare a formal appraisal of the pre-flood value of your land and lot.
 2. If you did not have flood insurance, you will be offered 75% of this amount. For example: if your property is appraised at \$100,000, you would be offered \$75,000.
 3. If you did have flood insurance, you will have the amount of the flood insurance claim payment subtracted from the property value. Your offer will be 75% of the balance. For example: If the property is valued at \$100,000 and you received a claim

payment for \$60,000, the offer would be 75% of \$40,000 or \$30,000. In the end, you would have received a total of \$90,000.

4. You can decide if you need more than 75% of the appraised value. Whether you were insured or not, you can apply for a Small Business Administration loan. This can help pay the costs for a new property. For example: Your property was appraised for \$100,000 and you receive \$75,000 for it. You still have a \$50,000 mortgage payment. You pay off the mortgage and use the remaining \$25,000 plus a low interest SBA loan to purchase a new place. The loan can also help pay for new furniture, etc.

9.3. It is recommended that you carefully review your options. You have plenty of time to think about them while your house dries out. Stay in touch with the City staff and any news on the funding programs.

1. Here are the advantages of participating in the acquisition proposal:

- You will no longer face flooding.
- You won't have to repair your house (but you need to clean it up).
- You won't have to elevate your house.
- You can opt to buy back your house and move it to a flood free site.

2. Here are the disadvantages:

- You will only receive a direct payment of 75% of your property's fair market value (you may receive additional payments from other sources)
- You will have to wait until as late as December 15 before you know whether the project will be approved (although you will have to wait a while anyway until your walls and floor have dried out enough to recover.
- You will have to wait a few months longer before an offer is made.
- The offer you receive may be lower than you would like (but you can pay for your own appraiser to make a counter offer).