



City of Greensboro  
Water Resources Department  
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Greensboro, NC 27402

Prsrt Std  
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PAID  
Permit #72  
Greensboro, NC

# Know the Facts About Flooding

Flooding can happen anywhere. In urban areas like Greensboro, it can be caused by heavy rainfall in a short amount of time, or blockages in drainageways, such as culverts and bridges. When many buildings and parking lots are located on a small amount of land and in close proximity to one another, water cannot readily soak into the ground. Water from rainfall has to go somewhere.

The City has an underground network of pipes that carry water into nearby streams and lakes, but when rainfall is too intense, this system exceeds its capacity to carry water and the water may back up into urbanized areas. Some flooding is unavoidable. It is a natural occurrence that would happen regardless of development intensity. That's why it's important to know where flooding is most likely to occur and how to protect your family and your property.

## The Local Flood Hazard

The City of Greensboro has several streams that are subject to flooding during and after heavy rainstorms. In fact, any creek or drainageway is subject to flooding. In Greensboro, **1** North Buffalo Creek, **2** South Buffalo Creek, **3** Horsepen Creek, **4** Bull Run Creek, **5** Muddy Creek, **6** Richland Creek, **7** Ryan Creek, **8** Mile Run Creek, **9** Reedy Fork Creek, **10** East Fork Deep River, and their tributaries can cause areas of localized flooding that cover roads, yards, basements, and lower levels of some houses.

Your property is located in or near a regulated floodplain and may be at risk.

# Know the Facts About Flooding



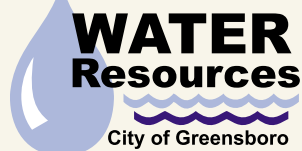
Did you know?

Flooding can happen anywhere, even in Greensboro.

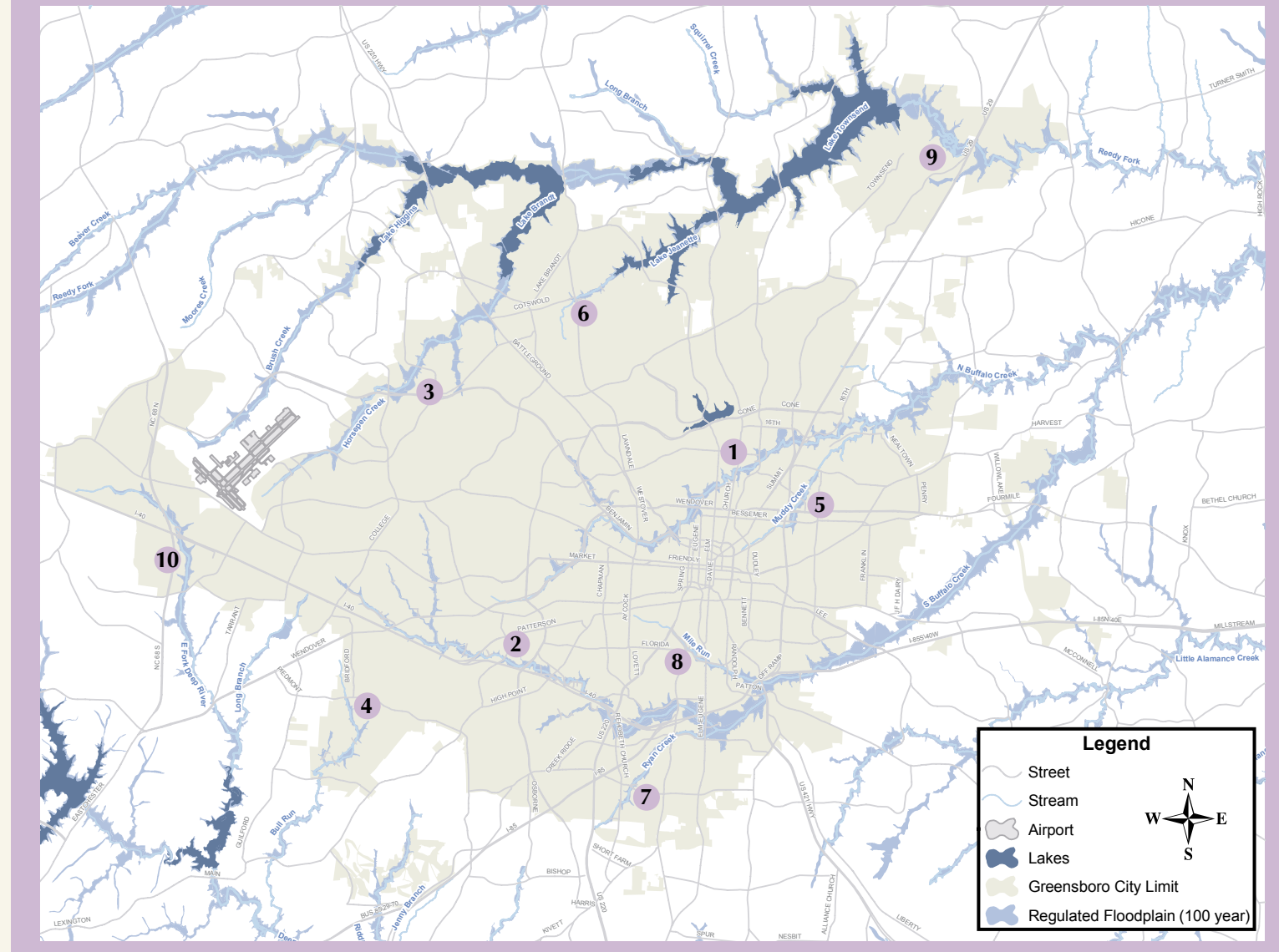
A few inches of fast-moving flood water can knock you off your feet, and a couple feet of water will float your car!

Homeowner's insurance does not cover damage from flooding.

Floods are natural processes. Since most flooding is unavoidable, it's important to know what to expect and how to respond.



## City of Greensboro Flood Risk Map



The layout shown was created by the City of Greensboro Stormwater Management Division with use of a Geographical Information System (GIS). The map shown is a graphical representation and is not to scale. To determine if a property lies within a floodplain, call the City of Greensboro Water Resources Department at (336) 373-2055 or visit our website at [www.greensboro-nc.gov/stormwater/flood](http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/stormwater/flood).





## Flood Insurance

The City of Greensboro participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP makes federally backed flood insurance available for all buildings, whether they are located in a floodplain or not. Flood insurance covers direct loss caused by surface flooding, including a stream flowing over its banks, and local drainage problems. Homeowner's insurance and renter's insurance do not cover flooding damages or losses.

The NFIP insures buildings, including mobile homes, with two types of coverage: structural and contents. Structural coverage is for the walls, floors, insulation, furnace and other items permanently attached to the structure. Contents coverage may be purchased separately provided the contents are in an insurable building.

To find out more about flood insurance, contact your insurance agent. There is usually a 30-day waiting period before the flood insurance policy takes effect, making it important to get insurance well before a flood threatens your property.

## Floodplain Development Permit Requirements

All development inside the floodplain requires a permit from the City Inspections Division. Before you build, fill, or otherwise develop inside the floodplain, or to report illegal floodplain development, call the Inspections Division at 373-2155.

## Property Protection Measures

Every year, flooding causes more damage in the United States than any other natural disaster. While regulations have made new homes less prone to flooding, many existing structures remain susceptible.

The most effective and permanent means of protecting your structure is locating it outside of the floodplain. If you are unable to relocate your structure, one solution is to raise the base floor elevation of the home above the level of the floodplain. Floodwaters may still reach the home, but this solution will make it much less likely that water will enter the habitable space. It's also important to landscape your property so that water will drain away from the foundation wall, regardless of its flood vulnerability.

To help mitigate the effects of flooding, some emergency measures may help. Property may be protected by sandbagging areas where water might enter living spaces. Also, valuables and furniture may be moved to higher areas of the dwelling to minimize damages.

## Substantial Improvement Requirements

The 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 according to City Ordinance Article VII: Section 30-7-5. This ordinance can be found on the city's website at [www.greensboro-nc.gov/planning/ordinance/article7/section75.htm](http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/planning/ordinance/article7/section75.htm). To find out more about the city's substantial improvement requirements, call the Water Resources Environmental Helpline at 373-2812.

## Natural and Beneficial Functions

Although urban flooding can be hazardous, it is actually beneficial to the environment. When water moves into the floodplain, the flow slows down, which allows pollutants to settle out. Natural vegetation along our creeks and streams also helps to filter out pollutants. This improves water quality and provides for diverse fish and wildlife habitats.

The city has constructed a wetland in south Greensboro along South Buffalo Creek to recreate natural flooding conditions to help filter pollutants from the creek. The wetland is located in an undeveloped area to prevent flood hazards.

You can also help protect water quality. Don't dump chemicals such as paint, oil, or herbicides into storm drains, ditches, or streams. Unlike the sanitary sewer system, the storm drainage system carries water directly into streams and lakes, untreated.

## Drainage System Maintenance

Greensboro has a separate stormwater drainage system that is comprised of storm drains, pipes, ditches, and streams. The system carries stormwater away from homes, businesses, and ultimately empties into streams and lakes.

Maintenance of the drainage system is very important. By removing the trash, yard waste, and other debris that can obstruct the flow of water, some localized flooding can be prevented.

Call 373-2375 to report blockages in culverts and under bridges.



## Residents can help!

- Do not litter. Litter from streets washes into the drainage system, where it is carried directly into streams and lakes. It is against the law in NC to dump waste into streams, lakes, and drainageways.
- Dispose of yard waste properly. Rake leaves to the edge of your yard, not into the street where they can be washed into storm drains and cause blockages.
- Report drainage problems to the Environmental Helpline at 373-2812.



## Flood Safety

You can help protect yourself from flood hazards by taking measures to ensure your safety before, during, and after a flood occurs.

- If floodwaters start to rise, evacuate to higher ground.
- Before leaving, turn off the electricity at the main breaker, and shut off the gas at the outside valve.
- If you cannot take pets with you, put out food and water for them. Ensure that pets are not tied or penned in flood prone areas.
- Do not walk through flowing water. Currents can be deceptive; just a few inches of moving water can knock you off your feet.
- Keep children away from floodwaters, ditches, culverts, and drains.
- Never attempt to drive through a flooded area.
- Don't drive around road barriers. They are there for your safety.
- Stay away from downed power lines and electrical wires. Electric current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to the electric company.
- After a flood, avoid walking on unstable flood debris, and wear gloves when handling debris or cleaning up.

## Contact Information

For information about the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), call 1-888-FLOOD 29 or visit FEMA's Flood Website at [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov).

To determine if a property lies within a floodplain, call the City of Greensboro Water Resources Department at 373-2055 or visit our website at [www.greensboro-nc.gov/stormwater/flood](http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/stormwater/flood).

To report blockages in drainageways, such as culverts and bridges, call the City of Greensboro Transportation Department at 373-2375.

To report other drainage problems, or to participate in the Adopt-a-Stream or Drain Markers Program, call the Water Resources Environmental Helpline at 373-2812 or visit our website at [www.greensboro-nc.gov/stormwater](http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/stormwater).

