

# Flood Readiness 101

## Flood Preparedness: Be Proactive

- **Clean your culverts and low-lying areas:** Keeping culverts open is the best way to keep floodwaters in the ditch rather than yards and driveways.
- **Keep sandbags on hand:** Property owners can buy sandbags at most hardware and home improvement stores. Sand can be purchased at most commercial gravel pits.
- **Make sure your sump pump is working:** Consider a backup as well.
- **Anchor fuel tanks:** Keep them from tipping over, spilling and floating away.
- **Long-term ideas:** Elevate critical utilities and waterproof your basement.

## Flood Preparedness: Stay Informed

- **Identify official sources of timely and reliable emergency information.**
- **Have a plan for how you will stay informed if there is a power outage.**
- **Monitor weather, Snotel reports and stream gauges:** [www.lccountymt.gov/des/flood-information/2019-flood-information.html](http://www.lccountymt.gov/des/flood-information/2019-flood-information.html)
- **Sign-up for Smart 911 ([www.smart911.com](http://www.smart911.com)) to receive area specific emergency notifications.**

## Flood Preparedness: Sandbags

- **Work with your neighbors to develop a sandbag plan.**
- **Look at the big picture; diverting water from your property could have negative effects elsewhere.**
- **Do not block or hinder County roadways with sandbags:** State law allows counties to remove obstructions. Emergency services and law enforcement must have access and sandbags in roads create dangerous traffic flow issues.

## During Flooding: Safety

- **Do not drive through standing water on roads or in parking lots:** The average vehicle can be swept off the road in 12 inches of moving water. Roads covered by water could collapse. Attempting to drive through water could stall your engine and cause irreparable damage. Driving through floodwaters creates wakes that cause additional problems.
- **Obey traffic signs.**
- **Do not go around barricades.**
- **Listen to law enforcement and others providing road closure enforcement.**
- **Take detours.**
- **Avoid contact with floodwaters:** All floodwater should be considered contaminated by sewage/wastewater, pet and livestock waste and other pollutants.

## After Flooding: Cleanup

- **Do not drink, cook or wash with water from a private well that has been flooded. It can make you sick:** If you have questions about your well water, contact the Lewis and Clark County Water Quality Protection District at 406-457-8927.
- **Keep children and pets away from sewage or wastewater-affected areas:** If your home or the area around it has flooded, your septic tank may fill with water. This can cause sewage to back up into your home or flow into floodwaters. For information on managing your septic system, call 406-447-8385.

**Additional information and resource links can be found online at:**

[www.lccountymt.gov/des/flood-information/2019-flood-information.html](http://www.lccountymt.gov/des/flood-information/2019-flood-information.html)

