



### Points of Interest

- Preparing Families for Emergencies
- Flood Prevention
- How Organizations Can Prepare
- Tip of the Season

Volume 3 Issue 6  
November/December 2007

**Sewer block or overflow?  
Call us first at 644-8949**

VALLEJO SANITATION & FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT

# Currents

## PREPARING FAMILIES FOR EMERGENCIES

Emergencies can take many forms: floods, fires and earthquakes are just a few. The Solano Co. Office of Emergency Services reminds us to prepare our whole families when it comes to emergencies:

- Create a family communications plan so you can get in touch with family members.
- Give copies of contact information and meeting locations to everyone in your family. Place a laminated copy and medical information to keep in your child's backpack.
- Discuss choices for communicating: telephones, cell phones, email, and bulletin boards.
- Make sure you know the emergency plan at your child's school.
- Make a decision about where family members will meet in case you cannot get home during an emergency. Show your kids the meeting spots so they are familiar



finding them on their own.

- Discuss how you can protect your pets during an emergency. Create a pet preparedness kit.
- Have the kids do a "scavenger hunt" for disaster supplies you will need to create a family disaster kit. For example, flashlight, batteries, radio, non-perishable foods, water, warm clothing. Copies of your plan should be kept in your disaster kit in case you need to leave in a hurry.
- Ask kids to discuss their concerns and feelings. Do they understand the plan and why it is needed?

The more we are prepared, the easier it will be to keep our families feeling safe and secure if an

emergency occurs.

You can log onto [www.SolanoCounty.com/oes](http://www.SolanoCounty.com/oes) for more ideas about how to prepare your family for emergencies.

Remember that during a real emergency tune to FM radio station 95.3 KUIC.

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## KNOW YOUR FLOOD POTENTIAL

### *Did You Know?*

*A 100-year flood is often used as a benchmark for catastrophic flooding.*

*This magnitude of flood has a 1% chance of occurring within any given year.*

*A floodplain is defined by FEMA as an area prone to flooding.*

*A flood stage water level is the water level at which a river overflows its banks.*

*A flood watch means a storm is possible in your area.*

*A flood warning means that a flood is occurring or about to occur in your area.*

Be aware if that if you live in a low-lying area there could be a high risk of flooding. Call the Vallejo Public Works Department at 648-5229 and ask whether your property is in a flood plain and if it is above or below the flood stage water level. To help determine your flood risk, consider the elevation of your home compared to the street level.

If your home was built after the establishment of the Federal Flood Insurance Program thirty years ago, its floor elevation is most likely above the flood stage water level. If your home is older, this may not be the case. Also, if you have converted a basement or garage into a living space, it may be subject to flooding.

Homes outside of floodplains can



sometimes be in danger of flooding as well.

Residents, whether they live in a floodplain or not, should be familiar with flood prevention and preparation.

### CAN I PREVENT FLOODING?

Yes! Whether you live in urban or rural areas, taking precautionary measures can help prevent flood damage during the rainy season.

- Clean out gutter downspouts.
- Keep trash and

leaves out of street gutters to prevent clogging storm drains.

- Keep the drainage system (creeks and culverts) of your property clear of debris.

- Clear dead trees that may block a drainage system. Even during storms, it's possible to lower the potential for flooding by raking leaves that are clogging a storm drain.

### VSFCD'S FLOOD CONTROL ROLE



The District's primary role in flood control is to protect lives and property from the effects of flooding by comprehensive, coordinated flood prevention planning. The District evaluates flood risk and

implements flood control measures such as requiring new development to construct detention basins. The District:

- Implements flood control projects;
- Maintains existing flood control facilities;
- Develops and implements master plans for selected areas;
- Provides technical support and

information on flood control for the City;

- Reviews proposed development projects to see that they meet District standards.

The District also works to protect Vallejo from the threat of floods by designing and constructing channels, storm drains, dams, pump stations and other drainage related facilities.

## PREPARE YOUR HOME

You can help prevent or reduce damage caused by flooding with these simple tips:

- Secure motor oil, antifreeze, and household chemicals on high, enclosed shelves.
- Landscape with native plants that resist soil erosion.
- Raise your washer, dryer and other equipment in your garage above the base flood elevation. This is the elevation of a



- 100-year flood event.
- For the few homes with basements, install flood shields or barriers above the base flood elevation.
- For rural residents with septic systems, new septic systems should be constructed in areas that will not be impacted by floodwaters.

### On The Web

National Weather Service  
www.crh.noaa.gov

The Weather Channel  
www.weather.com

American Red Cross  
www.RedCross.org

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)  
www.fema.gov

Floodplain Management Association  
www.floodplain.org

Vallejo Sanitation & Flood Control District  
www.vsfcd.com

**Sources**  
Solano County Flood Awareness, Solano County Water Agency, Office of Emergency Services

## PREPARE YOUR FAMILY

- Check your homeowners or renters insurance for flood coverage—if none exists, consider purchasing it.
- Keep insurance policies, documents and other valuables in a safe-deposit box.
- Keep emergency numbers by all phones.
- Store supplies at work, home and car in handy locations: first aid kit and essential medicines, non-perishable food items, non-electric can opener, cash, portable radio, flashlights and extra batteries.
- Store drinking water in closed, clean containers in case water service is interrupted. Allow one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days.
- Know safe routes from your home or office to high, safe ground.
- Keep your car fueled.
- Keep sandbags and other emergency building materials handy for waterproofing.

## SANDBAGS



During the winter, the District makes free sandbags and sand available to Vallejo area residential customers. You will need supplies before you come, so

check our website at **www.vsfcd.com**. The Sandbag Station is located at the back of the treatment plant at the west end of Solano Avenue.

# EMERGENCY PLANNING FOR ORGANIZATIONS

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, the federal government began an aggressive program of emergency management plan development. The goal was to create a nationally used and standardized National Incident Management System (NIMS) and National Response Plan (NRP) for emergencies with nationwide impact. All governmental entities are required to comply and private sector is encouraged to comply with the plan.

In order for the District to stay in compliance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the District has just completed its annual assessment of our Emergency Management Plan. All District personnel have received on-going emergency training in NIMS. By staying NIMS compliant, the District stays eligible for federal reimbursement/funding if a disaster is declared by the President within our District's boundaries.

If your company or organization is interested in finding out more about NIMS, go on-line to [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) or search the web for "NIMS training."

## FIREPLACE ALTERNATIVES

In winter, fireplaces and wood-stoves generate 40% of the Bay Area's particulate air pollution. These very fine particles—invisible to the eye—are the most harmful to health because they lodge deep in the lungs.

Some of the particles in the air fall back into the Bay and into our watersheds. A natural gas fireplace eliminates more than 99% of the pollution generated by a traditional fireplace, and is six to nine times more energy-efficient!

You can help improve Bay Area air quality in the winter by reducing the use of your fireplace. If you do burn, follow these guidelines:

- Burn only seasoned hardwood (oak, almond, madrone, apple).
- Minimize burning of softwoods (pine, poplar, cedar, redwood).
- Never burn garbage, plastic, glossy or colored paper, or scrap wood that has been painted or stained.
- Make sure the fire is very hot and has a good air flow. Don't try to "choke it down."
- Burn manufactured logs. Logs made of compressed sawdust burn cleaner because they burn slowly at high temperatures, producing less smoke and emitting 50% less particulates, carbon monoxide, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs).



## Tip of the Season

Protect your sewer pipes from clogging and causing overflows this holiday season by following these simple tips:

- Do not put dairy products, fats, oil, grease or greasy foods down the garbage disposal or drain.
- Freeze small amounts of fats and grease in a container with a tight-sealing lid and dispose of it in a trash receptacle.
- For greasy pans, first pour off the grease into a container as mentioned above. Then wipe any remaining grease out of the pan with a paper towel before washing as usual.

It's easy for Vallejo residents to recycle used cooking oil and grease, and prevent drain clogs. Simply bring it to Vallejo Garbage Service at 2021 Broadway in Vallejo. Hours are Thurs-Sat 8 AM to 4 PM. No appointment is necessary, but they're closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. For more information, call 552-3110. If you'd like to receive a free brochure on Fat Free Sewers, call 644-8949 ext. 292.



Currents is produced bimonthly by the Vallejo Sanitation & Flood Control District. For more information, visit [www.vsfcd.com](http://www.vsfcd.com) or call (707) 644-8949.