



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Walla Walla District

FLOOD EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

In Walla Walla District, call 509-527-7146 (24hours)

Flood Emergency Responsibilities

The first responsibility for protecting homes and property from flood damage rests with the individual. Local governments and agencies, such as flood control districts, may share in this responsibility, and together form the community's first line of defense in preventing flood damages.

Occasionally, however, local resources are not able to control or contain a flood emergency situation. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood disaster assistance program is intended to supplement and assist local governments, institutions, and special purpose districts when more help is needed.

When an impending disaster is greater than the capability of local or state agencies, the Corps of Engineers has the authority under Public Law 84-99 to provide emergency flood protection of limited scope. We can provide assistance for flood emergency preparation, flood fighting, repair and restoration of flood control works damaged or destroyed by a flood, or emergency water supplies. Assistance may also include providing technical assistance, equipment, sandbags, pumps, or other materiel for an imminent or actual emergency.

Our assistance is intended to be supplemental, and not a replacement for community self-help, and requires a written request for assistance from a local sponsor. No assistance can be provided directly to individuals.

The sponsoring agency can be a state, county, city, or other entity fully authorized to provide the requirements of local cooperation, and to pay any local share of the costs. Since most emergency work is to provide protection for an immediate situation, our authority does not extend to the reimbursement of flood fighting costs incurred by state or local authorities, flood and debris clean up, or the removal of temporary flood control structures.

Emergency Assistance Available

The sponsoring agency can request a flood emergency declaration and retain full control of a flood fight, or request us to work in an assigned sector. Federal regulations preclude Federal employees from working under the direct supervision of the sponsoring agency. On request, we may assume a leadership role, and direct flood fighting efforts.

The Corps of Engineers can provide emergency assistance under the following categories:

- Flood fight assistance
- Rehabilitation of existing flood control structures
- Advance Measures
- Emergency Water supplies

Flood Fight Assistance

Flood fighting includes strengthening existing flood control works, construction of temporary works such as earthen dikes and mud boxes, or sandbagging low lying areas. We maintain a limited stockpile of sandbags and other flood fighting materials intended to augment the stocks of local jurisdictions during actual flood emergency situations.

Local governments and flood control districts are responsible for maintaining a supply of sandbags adequate to cover anticipated emergencies. In the event we issue sandbags, unused stocks must be returned as soon as the emergency condition is over. Consumed supplies must be replaced in kind, or paid for by local interests. This may be waived by the District Commander for extreme circumstances.

Rehabilitation of Flood Control Works

Rehabilitation and restoration is limited to flood control works damaged or destroyed by a flood. The damage cannot have been as a result of poor or deficient maintenance. The rehabilitated structure will normally be designed to provide the same degree of protection as the original structure, and the repair work must be economically justified. Local interests must submit requests for rehabilitation assistance within 30 days after the flood event that caused the damage.

The Corps will bear 100% of the construction costs to rehabilitate Federally authorized and constructed projects. The Corps will bear up to 80% of the construction costs for non-Federal projects (i.e., not authorized by Congress). The remaining costs are the responsibility of the local sponsor.

Advance Measures

When a flood is forecasted or predicted, and a written request is received from the Governor, the Corps of Engineers can initiate work to protect against the loss of life or to prevent damages to improved property. Advance measures can be taken to protect against the threat of possible flooding caused by failure of flood control works, channel obstructions, potential dam failure, or an unusual snowpack.

We can also provide technical assistance to state and local agencies, loan stockpiled supplies and equipment, construct temporary dikes, sandbag, or assume operational control or direction of the emergency work.

Emergency Water Supplies

Upon receipt of a written request from the Governor, the Corps of Engineers may provide emergency supplies of clean drinking water to any community with a source of contaminated water causing, or likely to cause, a substantial threat to public health. The contamination may be accidental, deliberate, or caused by natural events. Our authority is limited to emergency supplies of drinking water, and does not include other municipal or commercial water uses.

Emergency water assistance is intended as a temporary measure, until the locality is able to assume responsibility. In certain, limited cases, we can also provide assistance to farmers and ranchers for stock water within a designated drought distressed area. This does not include providing water for crop irrigation.

Inspection of Completed Works

The Corps of Engineers conducts periodic inspections of eligible flood control works, at no cost to the local interests. These assess the level and effectiveness of protection provided by flood control works (such as levees). The inspections serve an important purpose by acquainting local officials and Corps personnel with potential problem areas, maintenance deficiencies, and borrow sources for use during emergencies. Special on site inspections may be conducted at any time during the year, such as immediately following a period of high water, or on request from the local flood control officials.

Obtaining Emergency Assistance

If a flood event within Walla Walla District is beyond state and local capabilities, call Emergency Management Branch at 509-527-7146. This phone rings at all desks, and includes a recorded message with instructions for after-hour contacts.

When the request is received, the caller will be promptly advised if Corps assistance is appropriate. If the problem is within our authority, personnel may be sent to investigate and take appropriate actions.

Written assurances are required from the local sponsor before assistance can be provided. Assurances are similar to the following:

- Provide, without cost to the United States, all lands, easements, and rights-of-way necessary for the construction of emergency flood control works.
- Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the emergency flood control works.

When the emergency work will result in structures that may be considered permanent, an assurance to maintain the project will also be obtained, in addition to the above:

- Operate and maintain the emergency flood control works after completion, as per regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Army.

If an emergency exists, the District Commander may elect to start work without the assurances, if conditions so warrant.

A sponsor's maintenance obligation requires a permanent right-of-way easement from the land owner, but does not require conveyance of any property to the United States.

Contacting the Corps of Engineers

District boundaries are shown in the map below. The Walla Walla District, Emergency Management Branch, may be contacted at:

Walla Walla District (CENWW-OP-EM)
Attention: Emergency Management Branch
201 North 3rd Street
Walla Walla, Washington 99362-1876
Phone: (509) 527-7146
E-mail: CENWW-EOC@USACE.ARMY.MIL
Web: <http://www.nww.usace.army.mil/html/offices/op/em/opempg.htm>

[Click here for a map of the District boundaries.](#)

Addresses and phone numbers for Districts adjacent to Walla Walla:

Omaha District
Attention: Readiness Branch
215 North 17th Street
Omaha, NE 68102-4978
Phone: (402) 221-4148

Portland District
Attention: Readiness Branch
P.O. Box 2946
Portland, OR 97208-2946
Phone: (503) 808-4400

Seattle District

Attention: Readiness Branch
P.O. Box 3755
Seattle, WA 98124-2255
Phone: (206) 764-3406

[Sacramento District](#)

Attention: Readiness Branch
1325 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-2922
Phone: (916) 557-6911

Return to the Walla Walla District [Homepage](#)

Emergency Management Point of Contact: jeffery.l.stidham@usace.army.mil

[Disclaimer about this W3 service](#)

This service is new and will be constantly growing and changing, so visit often.

www.webmaster@usace.army.mil

Last Updated: 07:29 24.06.97

<http://www.nww.usace.army.mil/html/offices/op/em/flodasst.htm>