

Texas Flood Fact Sheet



Hurricane Season 2008

The most familiar and frequent natural disaster in Texas is flooding. Heavy rains are a consistent threat across the state, while hurricanes and inland moving tropical storms have historically caused billions of dollars in flood damage to Texas homes and businesses.

Residents living on the state's coast are at a heightened flood risk during hurricane season due to much of the area's low lying elevation and the threat of storm surge from an inland moving storm. In 2005, storm surge from Hurricane Rita caused more than \$51 million in insured flood damage to the state's coastal communities, and just last year, Tropical Storm Erin dumped heavy rainfall throughout eastern Texas, resulting in an estimated \$45 million in damage.

TEXAS FLOOD FACTS

(Source: National Flood Insurance Program)

Flooding costs Texas. In the past ten years (1998 – 2007), insured flood losses totaled more than \$ 1.8 billion.

More Texas residents are now flood insured. Policies across the state have increased 8 percent in the past year, to 670,386 as of March 2008.

However, many Texas residents remain at financial risk. With more than 7.4 million households in Texas (2000 U.S. Census) and 670,386 insurance policies in force, only 9 percent of the state's households are covered.

BE FLOODSMART – REDUCE YOUR RISK

- **Learn your flood risk.** Properties that are not located within high-risk areas can also flood. Find out your flood risk right now by entering your address at **FloodSmart.gov** “One Step Flood Risk Profile.” Insurance agents can also help check your risk.
- **Plan for evacuation.** Plan and practice a flood evacuation route, ask someone out of state to be your “family contact” in an emergency and make sure everyone knows the contact's address and phone number.

- **Move important objects and papers to a safe place.** Store your valuables where they can't get damaged.
- **Conduct a thorough home inventory.** Thorough documentation of your belongings will help you file your flood insurance claim. For more information, visit www.knowyourstuff.org.
- **Build an emergency supply kit.** Food, bottled water, first aid supplies, medicines and a battery-operated radio should be ready to go when you are. Visit www.ready.gov for a disaster supply checklist.
- **Reduce your flood risk through home improvements.** Visit **FloodSmart.gov** to learn about ways to lower your risk of sewer backup, electrical problems, basement flooding and other flood-related issues.
- **Purchase a flood insurance policy.** Most homeowners insurance does not cover floods and there is typically a 30-day wait before a policy becomes effective. If you already have a flood policy, remember: your policy needs to be renewed each year.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Talk with your insurance agent about your flood insurance options. If you live in a high-risk area and carry a mortgage from a federally regulated or insured lender, you are required to purchase a flood insurance policy. If your property is located in a low- to moderate-risk flood zone, you may be eligible for a low-cost Preferred Risk Policy, which can start as low as \$120 a year.

Visit **FloodSmart.gov** or call **1-800-427-2419** to learn how to prepare for floods, how to purchase a flood insurance policy and what the benefits are of protecting your property against flooding.

