

Recovering from the Flood – Responses to Frequently Asked Questions ¹

City of Boulder / Planning and Development Services Center

Updated Monday, Sept 16, 2013; 5:00 pm

The following pages provide information and resources to assist Boulder residents and businesses in recovering from impacts inflicted by the recent floods. This information will be updated regularly as new questions emerge and additional information is available. For regularly updated flood recovery information, please visit www.BoulderFloodinfo.net. Questions can also be directed to the Planning and Development Services Center, at 303-441-1880.

Additionally, a Disaster Assistance Center is being established in Boulder to provide a one-stop location for FEMA, County and City information and disaster assistance. It is expected to be operational this week. Check the above website for updated information about the Assistance Center's opening date, address and hours.

Emergency Response

While many in our community are moving into "recovery mode," others are still affected by the flood emergency. Updated emergency response information can be accessed at www.boulderoem.com, including information on road closures, evacuations and infrastructure status. This is a countywide emergency response resource. Information is also available at the emergency operations call center: 303-413-7730.

Please call the same number (303-413-7730) to report missing or found loved ones.

Donations and Volunteering

- **I want to donate to help those most affected by the flood. Where do I call?**
Donations can be made to the Foothills Flood Relief Fund of the United Way by going to <http://www.unitedwayfoothills.org/> or dialing 2-1-1. It is generally encouraged to donate funds rather than specific goods or items, as the funds can be more easily channeled to the greatest need.
- **I want to volunteer to help with the recovery. Who do I contact?**
Volunteers can contact the Call Center at 303-413-7730 for volunteer opportunities, or call 2-1-1 for opportunities through the United Way.

Clean Up

- **Do I need to take any special precautions in the removal of flood debris?**
Yes. Flood waters can contain any number of contaminants that are accumulated upstream. Special precaution should be taken in the handling of flood debris. An excellent resource from the Center for Disease Control is at: <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/cleanupwater.asp>

- **Should I remove my carpet or just try to dry it out?**
 If your carpet has been saturated with water or contaminated by sewage, it will need to be removed (along with the carpet pad). Due to the absorbent nature of these materials they will not dry out completely and could harvest mold spores and bacteria.
- **Do I need to remove and replace water-damaged dry wall?**
 Water-damaged drywall loses its integrity and becomes brittle when it eventually dries out. It could also harvest mold and bacteria. Replacement of water-damaged drywall is advised. If the water damaged wall has insulation in the wall cavities this will also need to be replaced to avoid contamination with mold and other bacteria. This may be an issue as well even if you had only a couple inches of water on the floor and it seemed to only affect your baseboards. The best way to check is to remove part of your baseboard to carefully inspect the drywall.
- **I'm worried about mold and mildew. What can I do?**
 There are several flood restoration companies who specialize in mold/mildew mitigation and can help you know the proper steps to recovery. You can locate a potential contractor by visiting the list of licensed contractors on the city's website <https://bouldercolorado.gov/plan-develop/hiring-a-contractor> or searching online. Please be sure to check references before hiring a contractor.
- **There is more work cleaning up than I can manage. Who can I call to help?**
 There are several City of Boulder licensed contractors listed on our website <https://bouldercolorado.gov/plan-develop/hiring-a-contractor> who are able to perform the work. There are also several restoration companies able to aid in cleanup, and a quick search of Craigslist this morning highlighted a number of individuals offering to help with debris removal and clean-up. Depending on the extent of the damage you may best be served by a restoration company. Please be sure to check references before hiring a contractor.
- **I may have an older structure that likely has asbestos. Are there special precautions I need to take, or special permits required?**
 If asbestos-containing material is known to be present in flood debris in amounts greater than regulatory trigger levels, they must be removed in accordance with Colorado Air Quality Control Commission Regulation NO. 8 Part B. Trigger levels for single family residential dwellings are 50 linear feet on pipes, 32 square feet on other surfaces or the volume equivalent of a 55 gallon drum. If this is not known, the material may be handled as non-asbestos flood debris and disposed of at a permitted landfill. A state-issued demolition permit is not required to remove debris from a building that has been partially or completely destroyed. However, the debris must be thoroughly wetted prior to handling to minimize asbestos dust.

Additional information on proper handling of asbestos materials is at:
<http://www.bouldercounty.org/flood/pages/debris.aspx>

Disposal

- **Where can I dispose of water-damaged furniture, carpet and other items?**

The City has stationed roll off containers in locations throughout the city for disposal of damaged materials and debris. A list of locations is below. Please be sure to store the material on your property until they can be disposed of properly. Do not store material in rights-of-way (streets, gutters, sidewalks, etc.), this could cause greater drainage problems should another flood event occur.

LOCATIONS OF COMMUNITY DUMPSTERS

A map of locations is available at: <http://maps.bouldercounty.org/dumpsters/>

1. Foothills Community Park
(NOTE: this location will not be accessible [until Tuesday](#) at the earliest)
[800 Cherry Ave](#)
2. North Boulder Park
9th Street and Dellwood Ave
3. Salberg Park
[1825 Elder Ave](#)
4. Harlow Platts Park
1360 Gillespie
5. Mapleton Ball Fields
[2998 Mapleton Ave](#)
6. Valmont Park
[3160 Airport Road](#)
7. Scott Carpenter Park
30th St and Arapahoe (entrance off of 30th Street)
8. East Boulder Community Park
5660 Sioux Drive
9. Martin Park
3769 Table Mesa Drive
10. Eaton Park
East end of Nautilus Drive (Gunbarrel)
11. Chautauqua Park
[846 Baseline Road](#)

12. CDOT/County site at Intersection of Broadway and 28th Streets (entrance on right side just before road sign for US 36)
13. Centennial Middle School Tennis Courts
2205 Norwood Ave
14. Flatirons Golf Course
5706 Arapahoe Ave.

Coming soon:

- LiquorMart
 - Meadows Shopping Center
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- **If I put things out on the curbside, will they be picked up?**
Western Disposal has said they will be able to pick up materials left at the curbside during their regular trash routes. Keep in mind this may incur an additional charge. We encourage all to use the roll off dumpsters for proper disposal. If you have questions regarding fees for curbside collection, please contact Western Disposal at 303-444-2037.
 - **I have a lot of mud and muck I need to clean up. Where can I take it?**
Many homes and yards have been inundated with mud. Given that this debris is likely mixed with other contaminants, we advise removing the debris from your site as soon as possible. While it is heavier when wet, it can be a problem to let it dry, as depending on the particular situation it may harden and become more difficult to remove, and be blown around as dust, with resulting spread of contaminants. Flood-related mud, sandbags and other contaminated debris should go to the landfill.

Please do not pile debris in a manner that blocks gutters or sidewalks, creating a potential hazard and blocking drainage.
 - **Does everything just go in the trash, or can some things be recycled or composted?**
Although much of the damaged material looks like it would only be trash, there are materials that can be recycled or composted. Western Disposal will continue to offer curbside recycling, composting, and trash pick-up services, assuming that crews can access the streets. Their transfer station at 5880 Butte Mill Rd. and are back on their regular Monday to Saturday 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. schedule.
 - **What about electronics that were damaged?**
 - ***Electronics, such as computers, monitors and televisions.*** By state law these cannot be disposed in landfills. They can be recycled at various locations in the county including Western Disposal or the Eco-Cycle Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM) at 5030 “Old” Pearl St. (1 block north of Pearl Parkway off 49th St.). 1-800-GOT-JUNK or Green Girl Recycling offer collection services for electronics.

- **Hazardous waste, such as paint, motor oil, car batteries and pesticides.**
Residents can take these materials to the Boulder County Hazardous Materials Facility at 1901 63rd St. This facility is open additional days on Monday and Tuesday, Sept. 16 and 17, and will then revert to its regular Wednesday to Saturday schedule starting on Sept. 18. For more information on residential and business services, visit www.bouldercountyrecycles.org
- **Refrigerators, freezers, air-conditioners, and other appliances that require Freon removal.** Facilities that accept these items for special handling include: Western Disposal Services, CHaRM, and Bizzy B's.
- **Lawn mowers and other equipment containing gasoline.** Gas must be removed prior to recycling. These items can be recycled as scrap metal at Western Disposal or CHaRM.

Electricity and Gas

- **My water heater and/or furnace were submerged or sustained damage. Can I just dry them out and restart or do I need to have them serviced or replaced?**
If your appliance was submerged in water or even exposed to water during the flood, you should have your appliance serviced by a professional. There are several components in the appliance that may have sustained damage. Without proper servicing, use of the appliance could cause a serious health and safety concern.
- **My walls got wet. Does that mean my wiring may be damaged? How can I tell? Is it safe to turn my electricity back on?**
If your walls were wet it is highly likely your electrical outlets may have been damaged. Please consult with a licensed electrician to determine if there is damage needing repair. The electrical should be evaluated prior to restoring electricity to the affected areas in your home. Building inspectors will be available to aid in this inspection process.

Rental Properties

If you are concerned about the safety of a property you are renting, please contact the property management company or property owner. If you are a student at the University of Colorado, the Office of Off-Campus Housing & Neighborhood Relations has information posted on their website at <http://ocss.colorado.edu/>

Reconstruction

- **I need to do some reconstruction. Where can I find a contractor or other help?**
The City has a list of licensed contractors on its website, at <https://bouldercolorado.gov/plan-develop/hiring-a-contractor>
- **Do I need to get permits?**
A permit may be required for restoration work depending on the scope. If you need to make repairs to your electrical, mechanical, or plumbing system a permit will be

required. However if only simple drywall repairs are necessary you will not need to obtain a permit.

- **Where and how do I get a permit?**

Permits will be issued through the City's Planning and Development Services service center. We will have a streamlined permitting process consisting of an over the counter permit, which can be obtained at the time of application. Permit applications can be obtained at <https://bouldercolorado.gov/plan-develop/planning-development-services-publications-search> You may also find information for online building permit applications (skip-a-trip) at <https://bouldercolorado.gov/plan-develop/building-permits>

- **How can I get an inspector out to my house or business quickly?**

Inspectors will be making assessments to damaged properties over the coming days and weeks. They will begin in the most affected areas and work their way to the least affected. Since there are several properties to inspect your patience in this process is appreciated. To schedule an inspection please call 303-441-1880.

- **I have questions about reconstruction that I need answered. Who can I call?**

Additional city staff will be available to answer questions about reconstruction. Please call 303-441-1880.

- **I have a historic home that was damaged. Are there any special services available or things I need to know?**

If your house is individually landmarked or located within a historic district, a Landmark Alteration Certificate (LAC) is required for any exterior work, including repairs. The city is expediting this review process, using a modified LAC application (available at <https://www-static.bouldercolorado.gov/docs/simplified-lac-2013-1-201309161037.pdf>). Landmark approvals are processed concurrent with any required building permits. Please contact Historic Preservation Planner Marcy Cameron at (303) 441-3209 or cameronm@bouldercolorado.gov with any questions.

Water and Sewer Flooding

- **My property has sustained water and sewage flooding. What can I do?**

In many cases, this is groundwater and floodwater, not untreated wastewater (sewage). However, there are also many residents experiencing sewage backups due to widespread damage sustained by the sanitary sewer system.

Crews and contractors are working day and night to repair blocked or damaged sanitary sewer lines that were compromised during the flood and then filled with debris. Given the magnitude of the impacts our system sustained from the flood, this work is time-consuming and we ask for your patience.

If residents see or smell solid waste:

- They should evacuate, if possible, as raw sewage represents a health and sanitation risk: and
- Report the backup to the Emergency Call Center at [303-413-7730](tel:303-413-7730) and ask that the issue be reported to City of Boulder Public Works crews.

The city continues to urge water conservation measures by all city water customers (residents and businesses); minimizing water use and discharges to the sanitary sewer system will help mitigate impacts to affected residents and preserve the city's water supply.

Do not discharge sewage backup into flood waters, drains, and public/private roadways. Contact a professional restoration company in order to ensure the sewage is properly cleaned up. Sewage in the home comes with several health concerns if not cleaned up properly. Restoration companies can be found at <https://bouldercolorado.gov/plan-develop/hiring-a-contractor>

Insurance and FEMA

Boulder County has been designated a Federal Disaster Area. This qualifies businesses and residential property owners for federal assistance in various forms.

Disaster assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster. Federal funding also is available to state and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work in Boulder County. Federal funding is also available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures statewide.

Following are actions that a business or homeowner can initiate.

- 1) Check your flood insurance policy and contact your insurance agent.
- 2) Register for disaster assistance: Residents and business owners who sustained losses in the designated counties can begin applying for assistance on Monday by registering online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov or by calling [1-800-621-FEMA](tel:1-800-621-FEMA)(3362) or [1-800-462-7585](tel:1-800-462-7585) (TTY) for the hearing and speech impaired. The toll-free telephone numbers will operate [from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. MST](#) seven days a week until further notice.
- 3) Boulder businesses can apply for a disaster assistance loan with the Small Business Administration (SBA). To see if eligible go to: <http://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/loans-grants/small-business-loans/disaster-loans>
- 4) Check frequently with your Colorado OEM website for the latest on disaster assistance information at <http://www.coemergency.com/>

- 5) Contact the City of Boulder Planning and Development Services Center (or the County building department, if outside the city) with questions related to building repairs and rebuilding. They can be reached at 303-441-1880.
- 6) Clean up and mold information can be found at http://www.epa.gov/mold/mold_remediation.html
- 7) You can also obtain information at the Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) that is being established in Boulder. Details on the location and hours of operation will be available soon.

For more information as noted above, refer to your Colorado Office of Emergency Management website at <http://www.coemergency.com/> , the FEMA website at <http://www.fema.gov/disaster-survivor-assistance> , and the Disaster Assistance website at <http://www.disasterassistance.gov/>

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