FLOOD SAFETY
BOULDER, CO

SPRING 2014 POST-FLOOD COMPANION GUIDE

City of Boulder

BE AWARE • BE VIGILANT • BE SAFE

Following the September 2013 flood, the City of Boulder wants residents to be prepared for any flash flooding, elevated groundwater levels and potential hillside instability that may occur with normal spring runoff and precipitation events. Creek and drainageway conditions have changed since last spring and residents should be aware of the potential risks.

FLASH FLOOD

Floods can still happen in a flash.

Although the September event happened over a few days, flash floods are still Boulder's primary risk. Due to the last flood event, residents should be aware of creek conditions that may increase flash flood risks:

- Creek capacities have been reduced due to sediment and rocky/woody debris;
- Due to upstream conditions,water surges can occur if sediment or debris dams suddenly break free; and
- The annual filling and spilling of area reservoirs (like Barker and Gross reservoirs), will increase flows on Boulder and South Boulder creeks and may happen earlier and continue longer than a typical year.

ELEVATED GROUNDWATER

In September 2013, more than 17 inches of rain fell on the region over an eight-day period. At the height of the event, the local water table was above ground in some areas and caused the widespread flooding of basements.

- All indications show that groundwater levels are still elevated citywide. For example, the city has received reports that residents continue to use sump pumps throughout the winter months, when groundwater levels typically recede.
- Spring runoff and any local precipitation will only add to soil saturation levels.
- If your basement flooded in fall 2013 due to local groundwater conditions, it may happen again as groundwater levels rise.
- Property owners should ensure that sump pumps are functional or consult with an expert to have their system assessed.

LANDSLIDES AND HILLSIDE INSTABILITY

Saturated soils and the increase of groundwater levels throughout the spring creates the possibility of landslides or larger hillside instability. When recreating in and around Boulder County, always be aware of your surroundings and watch out for potential landslide indicators like:

- Frequent rockfall events of all sizes (may indicate larger hillside instability); and
- Visible shifts in formations or structures (tilted telephone poles or trees, new cracks in pavement or asphalt, etc.).

If you notice any of the above landslide indicators, please call 911 to report your findings.

Sign up for emergency notifications
Go to: www.BoCo911alert.com

City flood info: **www.BoulderFloodInfo.net**
Office of Emergency Management: **www.BoulderOEM.com**

PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS TIPS:
FLOOD SAFETY STARTS WITH YOU

Floods Can STILL Happen in a Flash

Although the September floods happened over a few days, flash floods are still Boulder's primary risk. Be aware of the increased flash flood risk due to reduced capacities and accumulated sediment and debris in creeks. If sediment and debris dams temporarily block creek flows and then suddenly break free, water surges may occur.

- **If creek levels suddenly rise or fall, move to higher ground and call 911.**

Stay Alert

Monitor the weather, watch the water levels in nearby creeks, and be aware of your surroundings. Frequent falling rocks or visible shifts in landscape formations or structures (like tilted telephone poles or trees, or new cracks forming in pavement or asphalt) may indicate greater hillside instability.

- **If you see something that doesn't seem right, call 911 to report it.**

Be Ready to Respond

Prepare in advance by making an emergency plan, choosing an emergency contact, designating safe meeting places, and assembling an emergency supply kit. Be ready to move to higher ground during heavy rainfall. In some locations and situations, it may be safest to shelter in place on the upper floor of the building.

Get Emergency Updates

Sign up for FREE emergency Alerts at **BoCo911Alert.com**. You can get alerts via home, work, and cell phones, text messages, and email. When a flood warning is issued for your area, seek emergency response information by tuning to local news and visiting **www.boulderoem.com**.

Buy Flood Insurance Now

Most standard homeowner's insurance policies do not cover flood damage to buildings or personal possessions. Boulder residents and businesses receive up to a 25 percent discount on standard flood insurance rates. Consider purchasing additional insurance coverage for potential sewer backups.

- **Call 1-888-379-9531 or visit www.floodsmart.gov and select "Agent Locator" under "Resources."**

Protect Your Property

Adjust downspouts to discharge away from your building and take measures to prevent floodwaters from entering through window wells, doors, and other openings. Any modifications or improvements must not adversely impact neighbors or adjacent properties and must comply with all adopted codes, standards, and regulations.

- **Visit www.boulderplandevelop.net to learn about city regulations and determine if a permit is required.**

Know Your Neighbors

As we saw in September, Boulder is full of caring and helpful folks. Collect your neighbors' contact information for emergency situations. Form neighborhood groups to meet, gather information, share resources, and mutually support each other.

Prepare for Basement Flooding

Local groundwater conditions indicate that soils are still saturated throughout Boulder. Spring runoff and any local precipitation will only increase groundwater levels. If below-ground areas on your property flooded before, it may happen again as groundwater levels rise throughout spring and summer. Consider buying a sump pump and test your dewatering system regularly to ensure that it is functioning properly.

Visit www.boulderfloodinfo.net or www.boulderoem.com for more information.