

Planning and Development Services (P&DS) staff is available to assist those that wish to repair, rebuild, restore, and take measures to protect their properties from future floods.

Before beginning any flood-related projects for your property, contact P&DS to determine if a City of Boulder permit is required. Email plandevlop@bouldercolorado.gov, visit www.boulderplandevlop.net or go to the P&DS Center at 1739 Broadway, third floor.

A City of Boulder permit and inspection is required for projects that affect the structure of a building or its electrical, mechanical, or plumbing systems. A permit is not required for drywall repairs or carpet replacements.

The City of Boulder will continue to waive fees for flood-repair permits and applications filed on or before March 1, 2015. There will be no fee charged for flood-repair permits or the subsequent inspections to ensure that flood damage has been properly addressed, though applicants will be required to pay the associated taxes.

Building

Any modifications or improvements to protect private property must not adversely impact adjacent properties and must comply with all adopted building codes, design and construction standards, and land use regulations.

Qualified maintenance staff or professional contractors licensed with the City of Boulder must complete many of the projects that require a city permit.

Visit bouldercolorado.gov/plan-develop/hiring-a-contractor for lists of city-licensed professionals.

Regulated Floodplains

The regulated floodplain covers approximately 15 percent of Boulder and 2,500 individual structures. Property owners with buildings located in the 100-year floodplain are required to obtain a Floodplain Development Permit before expanding a building or constructing improvements. Buildings located in the high-hazard or conveyance zones are subject to additional regulations and restrictions.

Visit bouldercolorado.gov/water/floodplain-maps to determine if your property is subject to regulations.

Groundwater Flooding

Due to elevated groundwater levels, some people may continue to have water seeping into their basements. Property owners are responsible for installing and maintaining dewatering systems for below-ground basements, crawlspaces, or foundations. Some may choose to restore everything except for subsurface portions due to the risk of damage from groundwater seepage and future floods.

Permits may be required for any projects in regulated floodplains, wetlands or buffer areas.

Subsurface Drainage and Sump Pumps

Installing a drainage system with a sump pump may help keep water out of below-grade areas of your property, prevent structural damage, and limit the buoyancy of your building. Sump pumps must discharge onto your own property, cannot discharge into a sewer pipe, and must not adversely impact neighboring properties.

Property owners that already have a drainage system and/or sump pump should maintain (or assess) their dewatering system on a regular basis to ensure that it is functioning properly and will continue to protect the property during and after a flood. Consult with geotechnical or structural engineers to identify any adjustments that can be made to improve the reliability or efficiency of the dewatering system. No permit is required to install a sump pump, unless related electrical or structural work is involved.

Those with significant risk may wish to consider purchasing a generator. All operating generators must comply with the city's noise ordinance.

Grading and Site Drainage

Drainageways that do not have a city easement are the property owner's responsibility. Those seeking to alter existing grades or drainage patterns to protect their property may need to apply for a grading permit, as well as a floodplain development and/or wetlands permit. A grading and drainage plan, stamped and signed by a Colorado-licensed professional engineer, may be required as part of the grading permit application. If the alterations are in the conveyance or high-hazard zones, an engineer's analysis is required to show that the changes will not cause additional flooding for neighboring properties or the city right-of-way.

Debris and Sediment

Remove accumulated debris and sediment from waterways on your property several times during the rainy season. Dead vegetation, trash, and rocks are considered debris and sediment is defined as the loose soil that was deposited by floodwaters. Removing sediment and debris to restore a waterway to its pre-flood condition is considered maintenance and may not require a permit if the area is located outside of regulated floodplains, wetlands, or buffer areas.

Do not remove live trees and vegetation, as they may be stabilizing the stream bank and/or part of a designated wetland. Contact the P&DS Center to determine if permits are required for anything beyond removal of flood-deposited sediment and debris.

Barriers, Berms and Walls

Construction of barriers, berms or walls in the floodplain requires a floodplain development permit. In the conveyance zone, an engineer's analysis is also required to ensure that the construction will not result in additional flooding for neighboring properties. Even if your property is outside of the regulated floodplain, be sure not to modify water flows and/or quantities in ways that may cause harm to neighboring properties or the city right-of-way.