

# BE PREPARED FOR A FLOOD

# WHEN FLOODING IS LIKELY

# DURING A FLOOD

# AFTER A FLOOD

Take these nine steps to prepare for a flood today.

- 1. Sign up for the VoyentAlert! Notification System.** Register for free to receive notifications from the City of Sumas of current or pending situations and emergencies.
- 2. Be familiar with the City's notification procedures** (see Ready, Set, Go brochure)
- 3. Purchase flood insurance.** A regular homeowner's policy will not cover losses caused by flooding; supplemental flood insurance is available from your agent. Property owners may insure their buildings and contents; renters may insure their possessions.
- 4. Make a list of your belongings so that you can substantiate an insurance claim.** Take photos of major items. Keep the list and photos in a flood-proofed place.
- 5. Know the safest evacuation route from your home to safe, high ground.** Choose a family rendezvous point in case you are separated during a flood.
- 6. Prepare an evacuation kit.** Make sure it includes a phone charger, flashlight, spare batteries, bottled water, canned goods, and warm clothing.
- 7. Learn where the shut-off valves for water, gas, and electric are** in your home.
- 8. Create a protection plan.** Think of where you can park cars, RVs, trailers, etc. out of harm's way.
- 9. Elevate your home.** Consider elevating the foundation of your home to provide permanent protection from flooding.

## Monitor Flood Levels:

A river gauge in Deming is used to monitor the flood level — most bulletins refer to the gauge's reading. Flooding usually starts

in Everson when the North Cedarville gauge reads 146.5, and water arrives in Sumas 10 to 12 hours thereafter.

**Monitor the river by checking Whatcom County River Conditions & Forecast website** — <http://www.whatcomcounty.us/666/Forecasts-Current-River-Conditions>

**Call Whatcom County Sheriff's Office Division of Emergency Management— Incident Hotline 360-738-4551**

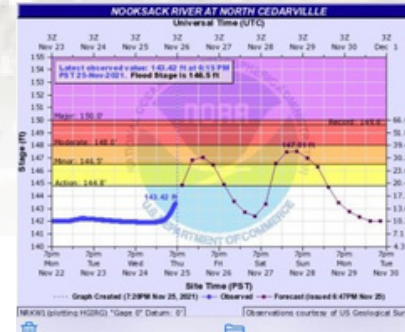
**Know the Siren Policy:** When the river overflows in Everson, and flooding has been deemed imminent within the City of Sumas, the siren will sound.

**Make sure your evacuation kit is ready.** Do not forget vital prescriptions medicines.

If time permits (and no evacuation order has been received), you can take steps to protect your property.

- Move furniture and small appliances to the second floor or to a higher surface.
- Shutoff electric, gas, and water service.
- Evacuate vehicles as planned.
- Move toxic substances to high spots.

**Sandbags:** Sandbags can be used to block minor amounts of water. During flood warnings, **sand and bags are available near the railroad tracks at the corner of Railroad and First Street.**



**Flood Warning System:** The City of Sumas will use the VoyentAlert! Notification System to notify subscribers of flooding conditions and procedures. (Refer to Ready, Set, Go brochure).

**Telephones:** Stay off the phone except for essential calls. To request help or report important information, please call the non-emergency dispatch 360-676-6911, or 911 if you need emergency help.

**Evacuation:** When order to evacuate, do so immediately. DO NOT ignore the advice of the public safety experts. Try to follow the safe route that you've already planned.

**Neighbors:** Help your elderly or disabled neighbors.

**Driving:** If possible, DO NOT drive through a flooded area. There might be submerged obstacles that you can't see. Especially avoid driving in a flooded area at night. **MOST DROWNINGS DURING A FLOOD OCCUR WITHIN A CAR OR TRUCK.** If your car stalls, abandon the car and wade to a safe place. DO NOT drive past road barriers put up by police or public works crew. Driving through a flooded area create waves that can increase the flood damage to nearby residences and businesses.

**Wading:** Avoid wading through water that reaches higher than your knee.

**Stranded:** If you are unable to evacuate your house because of high water, move to the second floor or to the roof. Wait for a rescue boat to arrive.

**Electricity:** Electrocutation is a major safety concern during floods. Stay away from downed power lines. Report downed lines to City Hall.

**Gas:** Be alert for the smell of gas. DO NOT use an open flame for light.

**Structural Check:** Before entering a building, check for structural damage. Make sure the building is not in danger of collapsing. (If your building has been severely damaged, now may be the time to elevate or flood-proof the building.)

**Animals:** Small animals may have looked for shelter in your home. Use a stick to poke and turn items over and scare away small animals.

**Utilities:** Be cautious about turning on electricity and gas. Check for live wires, shorts, etc.

**Water:** Do not start using city water until it has been declared safe.

**Appliances:** Do not use appliances or motors that have gotten wet unless they have been taken apart, cleaned and dried by a professional.

**Perishables:** Food or medicines that have gotten wet might be contaminated by chemicals, sewage, etc. When in doubt, throw it out.

**Clean-up:** Clean everything that got wet. Refrigerators, sofas, and other hard goods should be hosed off and kept for the insurance adjuster's inspection. Use a household cleanser to clean other items.

**Basements:** A flooded basement should be pumped out gradually over a period of three days. Rapid pumping might lead to structural damage.

**Photographs:** Take pictures of the damage to your building and its contents. Contact your agent to make a claim.

**CRAWLSPACE:** IF THE FLOOD VENTS ARE TO BE PLUGGED, IT SHOULD BE DONE FROM INSIDE THE CRAWL SPACE OR LEFT OUT DURING THE FLOOD SEASON.



# Find Emergency Updates:

- Sign up for VoyentAlert!
- Tune into KGMI (790 AM)
- Check for updates from the Department of Emergency Management (Whatcom County Sheriff's Office) at [www.whatcomcounty.us/201/Emergency-Management](http://www.whatcomcounty.us/201/Emergency-Management) or [www.facebook.com/WhatcomSheriff](http://www.facebook.com/WhatcomSheriff)
- Check the City of Sumas's website or Facebook page for updates (CityofSumas.com or [www.facebook.com/sumascityhall](http://www.facebook.com/sumascityhall))



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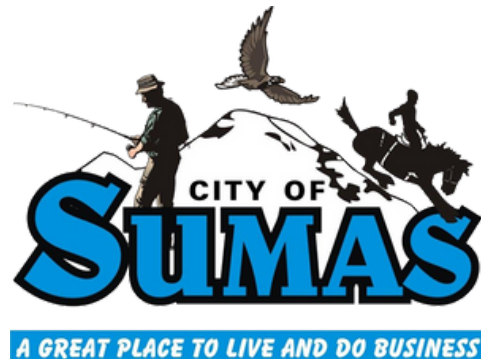
Phone: 360-988-5711

Fax: 360-988-8855

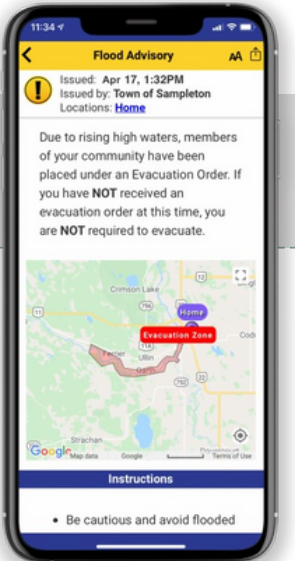
Website: [www.cityofsumas.com](http://www.cityofsumas.com)

# FLOOD SAFETY GUIDANCE

## Preparing for a Flood



# VOYENTALERT!



## REGISTER FOR FREE TODAY

Voyent Alert! Is a multi-purpose communication service provided by the City of Sumas to keep you informed of critical events like floods as well as day-to-day communications such as road maintenance and closures, water advisories, etc.

Receive alerts over a wide variety of communication channels including mobile apps, text/SMS alerting, email or voice dial. You can register for one or more communication channels.

Smart alerting capabilities ensure that you will only get notified when a communication is relevant to you or one of the locations you are following.

### MOBILE APP USERS

Download and install the Voyent Alert! App from the Apple App or Google Play stores



### REGISTER ONLINE

Register online to receive email, voice or text-based alerts at:

[register.voyent-alert.us](http://register.voyent-alert.us)