



Gila County

POST-FIRE FLOODING

PREPAREDNESS & MITIGATION GUIDE

"TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN"

INTRODUCTION

Wildfires burn hundreds of thousands of acres in Gila County each year. After such fires, there can be an increased risk of flooding or debris flows. High-intensity wildfires can destroy protective vegetation and alter soil so it is less able to absorb rainfall and snowmelt. Floods can be serious catastrophes and they are one of the most common hazards in the United States. Floods can be caused by a variety of factors, including a sudden accumulation of rain, rising rivers, tidal surges, ice jams, and dam failures.



GET YOUR SANDBAGS READY FOR MONSOON SEASON

Shore Up Your Sandbags Before Monsoon Season

A properly built and maintained sandbag wall can prevent or reduce flood damage to your home. Sandbags are susceptible to the elements, especially ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun, and do need periodic maintenance to keep them in good working order.

It's crucial to check your sandbag walls before the start of the monsoon season and replace those that are torn or otherwise damaged.

You can prolong the life of your sandbags by covering them in dark plastic sheeting (clear plastic sheeting will not protect against UV rays). Thicker sheeting will last the longest and help protect your sandbags against rain and snow. Plastic sheeting in a variety of colors and thicknesses is available at any hardware store.

SANDBAGS... KEEP THEM IN PLACE!

Some residents might wonder if they still need to keep their sandbag walls in place. They should for several important reasons:

- High-Risk for Flooding
- Back-to-back dry seasons = No test of mitigation
- Removing sandbags could cause adverse impacts to your neighbors



PROPERTY OWNERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SANDBAG MAINTENANCE

First and foremost, it is important to understand that sandbag maintenance is the responsibility of property owners. This includes repairs to sandbag walls and the disposal of old or damaged sandbags.



Pre-Monsoon Sandbag Deployment & Locations

Property owners and residents can replace their deteriorated sandbags. Gila County has set up sandbagging station at the following location:

Gila County Public Works
745 N Rose Mofford Way
Globe, AZ 85501

Sandbag Assistance

Residents who are elderly or have disabilities that prevent them from repairing their sandbag walls adjacent to their homes can Stacie Espinoza at (928) 402-4336 or email her at sespinoza@gilacountyaz.gov.

Pre-Filled Sandbags

Gila County, along with our local partners have stationed pallets of pre-filled sandbags at the following locations:

Miami Police Department
740 Sullivan St,
Miami, AZ 85539

Canyon Fire Department
1300 S Jesse Hayes Rd,
Globe, AZ 85501

Mackey's Camp
(Across the Creek)
Miami, AZ 85539



Removing Sandbags Could Cause Adverse Impacts

Sandbags and barriers designed to convey floodwaters downstream and out of your neighborhood. Because of the nature of water, flood mitigation needs to be contiguous, with no gaps. Removal of any section of this mitigation from an individual property may compromise the effectiveness of this system and could result in adverse flooding effects on adjacent properties, for which private property owners who removed the mitigation.

SANDBAGGING 101

The use of sandbags is a simple, but effective way to prevent or reduce the impact of flooding. Sandbags do not stop the water completely but can reduce the amount of water entering your property. Properly filled and placed sandbags can act as a barrier to divert moving water around, instead of through, buildings.

Step 1:

Lay plastic tarps in front of any doors or low windows and the side of the house that is threatened by floodwaters.

Step 2:

Bring plastic tarps as high up on the house as you expect floodwaters to reach. You can attach the plastic to the house with screws. You must put up plastic tarps where you want to prevent flooding; sandbags alone are not sufficient.

Step 3:

Place the first row of sandbags tightly against each other and touching the exterior of the house. The sandbags should lie parallel to the flow of the potential floodwaters. If your sandbags are tied, flatten the tied end. If your sandbags are not tied, tuck the flap under the sandbag. The opening of the sandbags should face against the water flow.

Step 4:

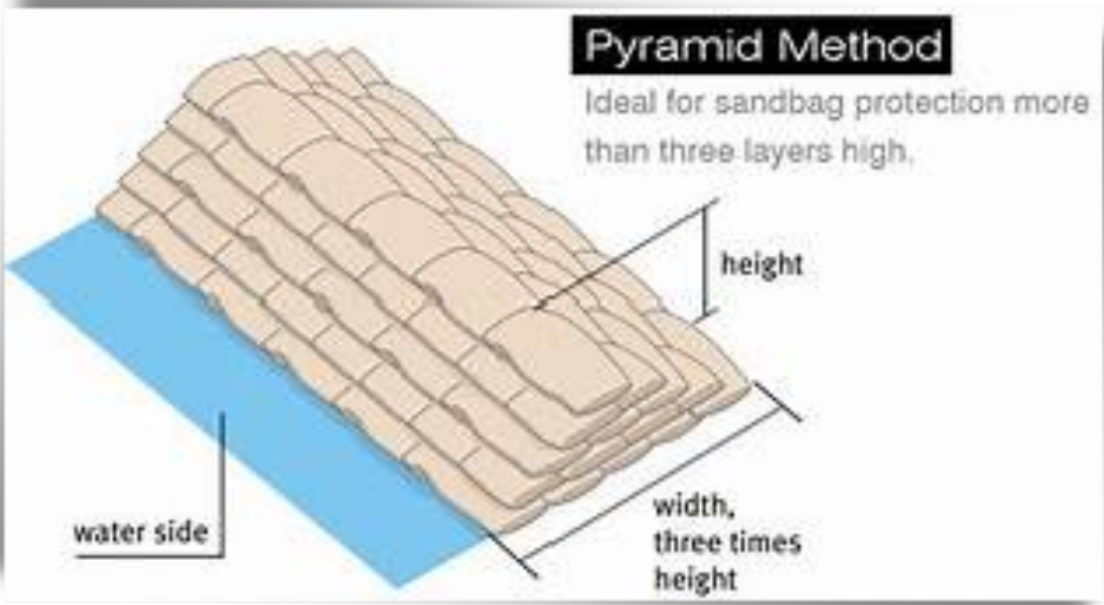
Place the second row of sandbags on top of the first. The first bag should start about halfway across the first sandbag in the bottom row, so each row of sandbags is staggered. Never put sandbags around the whole exterior of your house; this could trap floodwaters between your house and the sandbags.

Step 5:

Step on each sandbag to push them tightly into place and help seal any cracks.

Step 6:

Place sandbags in a pyramid shape to prevent flooding at higher levels, if necessary. To do this, determine how many layers high you want your pyramid. Make sure there is a similar number of sandbags across the bottom layer of the pyramid as the number of layers you want. For example, if you want the pyramid five sandbags high, place five sandbags across the bottom.



FLOOD PREPARATION: GETTING READY FOR MONSOON SEASON

The possibility of flash flooding during monsoon season is a fact of life in post-wildfire areas. Flash floods will give very little warning before they hit downstream neighborhoods. It is imperative that residents who live in Flood Areas prepare themselves for flash flooding during the coming monsoon season. Following are some tips to help keep you and your family safe:

Sign Up for Emergency Notifications

Gila County Everbridge mass notification system provides alerts for emergencies such as wildfires, thunderstorms, and flash flooding in your area. Go to <http://www.readygila.com/everbridge/> and sign-up. We will need your address, home or cell phone number, and email.



Emergency Notifications

www.ReadyGila.com

IMPORTANT ITEMS FOR STAY KITS:

- Prescription medications and eyeglasses
- Flashlight(s) with extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- Personal hygiene items
- Important papers (e.g.,
- Cash (e.g., small bills and coins)
- Cell phone and charger
- Manual can opener
- Pet supplies
- Your Family Communication Plan

Alerts and Warnings

Everbridge Weather Warning System uses polygon warning methodologies based on "Storm Based Warnings" direct from the National Weather Service (NWS) and contacts only those in the affected areas, eliminating many false alarms associated with prior notification methods.

As we all know, weather can change very rapidly during the monsoon season. A battery-powered weather radio is another great tool for keeping up with monsoon season storms.

Have An Emergency Preparedness & Communication Plan

Because flash flooding can strike unexpectedly, it is important that you and your family plan well in advance of monsoon season. Planning should include sheltering in place. If you are at work and get the emergency alert, do not go back into the flood area. Know how you will contact family members, how you will get back together, and what you will do in different situations. Emergency preparedness and family communication plan brochures from the Arizona Emergency Information Network (AZEIN) are available <https://ein.az.gov/hazards/flooding>.



Be Prepared to Shelter in Place

Residents should be prepared to shelter in place during a flood event and have emergency Stay Kits for their homes that contain enough supplies to support their families for at least 72 hours. Kits should include nonperishable food and potable water and provides for the needs of your family, including children and sick individuals.



Follow Ready, Set, Go!

Residents should always plan and be prepared for emergencies in their community. Gila County Emergency Management recommends all residents are in **Ready** mode.

- **READY:** Be aware of the hazards that can threaten your community. **Be prepared to evacuate.**
- **SET:** Know there is significant danger in your area. **Get ready to evacuate.**
- **GO:** Danger in your area is imminent and life-threatening. **Evacuate immediately.**

Prepare Your Property for Flash Flooding

Prior to the monsoon season, survey your property and strongly secure all objects. Loose objects like chairs, tables, BBQs, etc. will become dangerous floating objects during a flash flood. Remember to clear out any drainages of obstructions such as downed trees and debris. Also, know where your gas & water shutoffs and electrical circuit breaker panel are located and how to turn these utilities off.

SAFETY TIPS: HOW TO PREPARE FOR A FLOOD



PLACE FLOOD BARRIERS

Place sandbags, or other barriers, near vulnerable water entrances to your house to reduce potential damage.



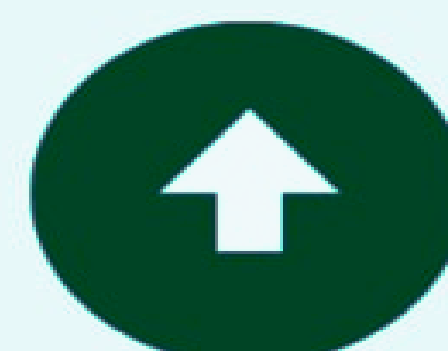
BOARD UP WINDOWS

Close and board up any windows that go to any room on the first level of your home and the basement.



UNPLUG ALL ELECTRONICS

Unplug anything that may get water damage. Turn off all utilities.



GET TO HIGHER GROUND

Flash floods are sudden and can sweep you away.



KEEP YOUR PETS WITH YOU

Pets also experience stress during emergencies. Always stay with your pets and keep them comforted.



STAY AWAY FROM FLOODED AREAS

Do not walk, drive, or swim through standing or moving water.



DO NOT GET NEAR DOWNED POWER LINES

Prevent electrocution. Always assume a downed power line is still charged. Call the electric company immediately to inspect it.

MAP OF FLOOD RISK AREAS FROM THE TELEGRAPH FIRE

