

Park County Flood Preparedness

The Yellowstone and Shields rivers typically see peak high water in between late May and mid-June. Although smaller creeks and the Shields can see early flooding from low and mid-elevation snow melt in April. March is a good time to start planning for spring flood events.

PLAN AHEAD

- Assess potential on your property for flood risk and exposure to high water.
- Clean out culverts and low-lying areas to allow water to pass through and drain.
- Know how to turn off electrical power, gas and water supplies.
- Keep sandbags on hand, or know where to acquire them. Sandbags can be purchased at most hardware and home improvement stores. Sand can be purchased at most commercial gravel pits. Don't wait until it's flooding to place sandbags.
- Make sure your sump pump is working properly: Consider having a backup ready as well.
- Move campers, trailers and vehicles to higher ground, or out of the floodway. Anchor anything to the ground that could float away, like fuel tanks.
- Move livestock, animals, farming equipment and supplies (including hazardous substances (e.g., pesticides, fertilizers, fuels, medicines, other chemicals) out of flood prone areas.
- Check your homeowner's insurance policy and consider purchasing flood insurance at least 30 days in advance of highwater.
- Be Safe! Have an evacuation plan, and everything you will need to evacuate ready to go. Make sure valuables and important items and documents are stored somewhere safe, or in waterproof containers.
- Be prepared to shelter in place, if the need arises, for up to 72 hours.
- Check in with your neighbors to coordinate and plan to help one another.

BE INFORMED — STAY INFORMED

- Know where to get timely, up-to-date information, even in the event there is no power (have backup batteries for radios and to charge a cell phone).
- Sign up for NIXLE to receive important alerts and warnings from Park County.
<https://www.parkcounty.org/uploads/files/content/1/Nixle-Fact-sheet-sign-up-sheet-nov-29..pdf>
 - SIGN UP BY TEXT To begin receiving text alerts, text your zip code to 888777
 - SIGN UP ONLINE <https://www.parkcounty.org/>

- Monitor area stream flow levels. Look at gages upstream at Corwin Springs and the Lamar River to get a sense of any potential spike in flow on the Yellowstone <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/mt/nwis/rt>
- Check the weather and flood forecast regularly. <https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/index.php?wfo=byz>
- American Red Cross: https://www.redcross.org/content/dam/redcross/get-help/pdfs/flood/EN_Flood-Preparedness-Checklist.pdf
- National Flood Insurance Program: <https://www.floodsmart.gov/>
- Flood Ready: <https://www.ready.gov/floods#prepare>
- MSU Extension: <https://apps.msuextension.org/magazine/articles/5571>

HOW TO STAY SAFE DURING A FLOOD EVENT

- Do not walk, swim or drive through flood waters.
- Do not drive around barricades — follow detour routes.
- Follow local emergency management and law enforcement instructions and directives.
- Take caution with flood water, it could potentially be contaminated with sewage and/or other pollutants.

POST-FLOOD INFORMATION

- Residents in need of post flood help or clean up assistance should call 211
- If you have a private well do not drink, cook or use water from it if it has been flooded. Refrain from using well water until it has been properly decontaminated.
- If your home was flooded, open it up and air it out to help prevent mold.
- Review the Upper Yellowstone Watershed Group Post Flood Best Management Practices found here: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/8cdb4da18a7049a8a6306b013dd42d1d>
- Montana Flood Recovery Resources: <https://www.mtwatersheds.org/disaster-recovery-and-resilience-resources-from-the-2022-yellowstone-floods/>
- Montana FEMA Information: <https://www.fema.gov/locations/montana>

LOCAL EMERGENCY CONTACT

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