

CITY OF VALLEY CENTER, KS FLOOD INFORMATION

Important Information Regarding the Possibility
of a Flood and What You Can Do to Prepare for
Such an Occurrence

FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

- The eastern part of the City by the West Branch of the West Chisholm Creek Floodway and Trails View Slough is within the West Branch of the West Chisholm Creek Floodway and Trails View Slough floodways. The western part of the City by the Little Arkansas River is within the Little Arkansas River floodplain.
- Flash-flooding is the general type of flooding caused by West Chisholm Creek Floodway and Trails View Slough. During a normal flood event, *2-4 inches of rain in a 3-4 hour* time period jeopardizes the Slough's banks.
- Flooding on the Little Arkansas River is normally a much slower event, and can be caused by rain north and west of the City as it makes its way down the river for eventual discharge into the Arkansas River.
- Various floods from both water bodies have hit Valley Center in recent memory. In the 1950's floodwaters from Little Arkansas reached *2' high on the downtown business fronts*. In the 1990's, floods from the West Branch of the Chisholm Creek reached as far north as Main and Meridian.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

- Information on whether your property is in the 100-year floodplain can be obtained by coming to the Valley Center City Hall, 121 South Meridian, and having the Community Development Director show you the location of your property on the Flood Insurance Rate Map.
- The Community Development Department can also provide other flood-plain related information. Contact the Community Development office at (316) 755-7310 for further assistance.

FLOOD SAFETY

The following common sense guidelines can help you avoid the dangers of flooding:

- Do not drive through a flooded area. More people drown in cars than any where else. Do not drive around barriers.
- Do not walk through flowing water. Currents can be deceptive. Six inches of water can knock you off your feet.
- Stay away from power lines and electrical wires. If your house is about to be flooded, turn off the power at the service box. Electrical current can travel through water. Electrocution is the 2nd leading cause of death during floods.
- Be alert to gas leaks. Turn off the gas to your house before it floods. If you smell gas, report it to Valley Center Fire Department or your gas company. Do not use candles, lanterns or open flames if you smell gas or are unsure if your gas has been shut off.

FLOOD SAFETY-Continued

- Keep children away from the flood waters, ditches, culverts and storm drains. Flood waters can carry unimaginable items that have dislodged themselves. Culverts may suck smaller people into them rendering them helpless.
- Clean everything that has been wet. Flood water will be contaminated with sewage and other chemicals which pose severe health threats.
- Look out for animals, especially snakes. Small animals that have been flooded out of their home may seek shelter in yours.
- Do not use gas engines, such as generators, or charcoal fires indoors during power outages. Carbon monoxide exhaust can pose serious health hazards.

PROPERTY PROTECTION MEASURES

If your property is susceptible to flooding, there are many flood damage reduction measures you can employ.

- Watertight seals can be applied to brick and block walls to protect against low-level flooding.
- Utilities such as heating and air conditioning systems, water heaters and other major appliances can be elevated to higher floors in the structure, or on raised platforms.
- Temporary measures such as moving furniture and other valuables to higher floors, or sandbagging exterior openings, will also help.
- Elevating, or relocating, the entire structure may also be a feasible option.

FLOODPLAIN PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

- All development within the 100-yr. floodplain (not just construction of buildings, but filling, excavation, fences, etc.) is required to obtain a Floodplain Development Permit.
- Applications must be made prior to doing any work in a floodplain area. Please contact the Community Development Department to receive all the information you will need in order to properly develop in the floodplain at (316) 755-7310. You may report any suspected illegal development activities to the above number as well.

SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT/DAMAGE

- The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requires if the cost of improvements to a building or the cost to repair damages (from any cause) to a building exceeds 50% of the market value of the building (excluding land value), the entire building must be brought up to current floodplain management standards.
- Building improvement projects include exterior and interior remodeling, rehabilitation, additions and repair and reconstruction projects.
- Additionally, the cost of currently planned improvements will be added to the cost of previously made improvements and compared to the existing market value to determine if the improvements exceed 50% of the structure's value. Please contact the Community Development Department at (316) 755-7310 for further information.

FLOOD INSURANCE

- If you do not have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Most homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from floods.

Flood insurance is only available to those participating communities in the NFIP. Because of our floodplain management programs that attempt to protect us from the multiple flooding hazards, Valley Center is part of the NFIP and thus, residents are able to obtain flood insurance. Additionally, because Valley Center is applying for FEMA's CRS program, flood insurance premiums may be discounted.

- Be sure to check your policy to ensure you have adequate coverage. Usually these policies cover the building structure, but not the contents. Contents coverage can also be obtained by asking. There is a 30-day waiting period before flood insurance coverage becomes effective. Plan ahead; do not wait until a flood is predicted before purchasing flood insurance.
- If you are building inside the floodplain, the purchase of flood insurance is mandatory when using a federally regulated/insured bank for a loan.

NATURAL & BENEFICIAL FUNCTIONS

- Floodplains play a valuable role in providing natural and beneficial functions to the area around, and including, Valley Center.
- Floodplains that are relatively undisturbed provide a wide range of benefits to both human and natural systems.
- These benefits provide aesthetic pleasure as well as function to provide active processes such as filtering nutrients.
- Parts of both the West Branch of the West Chisholm Creek Floodway and Trails View Slough floodplain are used as a means to filter farm chemical run-off so that these areas can maintain bio-diversity and ecosystem sustainability.
- Both floodplains contain historic and archeological sites that provide opportunity for education and study. Both enhance waterfowl, fish and other wildlife habitats and provide feeding/breeding grounds.
- And lastly, both floodplains provide natural erosion control and open space so further flooding damage does not occur.

DRAINAGE SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

- As simple as it may sound, simply keeping smaller ditches and streams free of debris can dramatically improve the run-off capacity of low-lying areas, as well as greatly reduce the occurrence blockage that significantly contributes to flooding.
- It is illegal to dump materials into a required waterway and violators may be fined.
- If you see someone in the act of dumping anything in one of the City's watercourses, please contact the Stormwater Officer at (316) 755-7320.
- If you see debris in one of our watercourses, please contact Public Works at (316) 755-7320.

FLOOD WARNING SYSTEM

- Many times, flooding along the Little Arkansas River within Valley Center can be predicted days in advance, giving ample warning for preparation and evacuation.
- However, in the event of a flash flood due to a large rain event, you may be the first to notice the oncoming situation and have only hours to execute a plan.
- Notify the Valley Center Police and Fire Departments. You will see regular interruption on local radio and television stations advising you of the situation.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you would like more detailed information regarding flood-related issues in Valley Center, here are some additional sources:

- FEMA Government website: <http://www.fema.gov/business/nfip/>
- City Hall (316) 755-7310
121 S. Meridian
Valley Center KS 67147
City website: <http://www.valleycenterks.org>
- Valley Center Public Library has a number of FEMA educational documents regarding floodplain issues.