

Flood Warning System

The National Weather Service along with the Sumter County Emergency Management and Public Safety Agency provides flood warning and evacuation data to local radio (WDXY, WKHT, WIBZ, Z-95, WSSC & WQMC) and television stations (WRJA, WIS, & WQHB), as well as the local newspaper (The Item). The Sumter County Sheriff's Department and the Sumter City Police Department will provide warnings to those areas threatened by flooding. When a flood threatens, evacuations may be ordered in areas expected to flood. Residents must be prepared to move to a place of safety. Sumter County in conjunction with the Sumter County Emergency Management Agency will announce emergency shelter locations.

Floodplain Development Permit Requirements

All developments in the floodplain need local permits. Contact the Sumter County Planning Department at (803) 774-1660 before filling, developing, or building in the floodplain. Improperly permitted or unpermitted projects can seriously impact the flood zone in your area. If you see building or filling without a permit sign posted, contact the Planning Department office immediately at (803) 774-1660.

** Do not dump or throw anything into ditches or basins. To report illegal dumping call (803) 436-2790 or 774-1627.

** Any development in the floodplain **without a permit is illegal**. Such activity should be reported to the Floodplain Manager at (803) 774-1619.

Substantial Improvement Requirements

Within the Sumter City and County Floodplain Ordinances, the following is required for all uses:

- * All new construction or substantial improvements of any residential structure shall have the lowest floor no lower than 2 feet above the Base Flood Elevation.
- * Building permits are required. In order to process and issue a permit, an elevation certificate is required to be attached with the application.

Substantial Damage Requirements

Cost of repairing the structure to its before-damaged condition is compared to the market value of the structure prior to the damage.

- * Estimated cost of repairs must include all cost necessary to fully repair the structure to its before-damaged conditions.
- * If equal to or greater than 50 percent of that structure's market value before damage, then the structure must be elevated (or flood-proofed if it is nonresidential) to or above the level of the base flood, and meet other applicable local ordinance requirements.

Drainage System Maintenance

Every proposed development must have a drainage system designed by an engineer to provide for the property drainage of surface water and to permit the unimpeded flow of natural watercourses. Sumter County also has a Litter Ordinance that prohibits any person from dumping or disposing of litter upon any public or private property including streams, ditches, and catch basins. The drainage system in Sumter County must be kept clean or flooding will occur. Debris, even grass clippings, in ditches and streams may obstruct the flow of water and cause overflow into streets, yards, or homes. If you see any violations, please contact the **Sumter County Sheriff's Dept. at (803) 436-2790 or the City Police Department at (803) 774-1627 or 774-1629.**

ARE YOU BUILDING IN A FLOODPLAIN?

Sumter City/County Planning and Building Department
12 W. Liberty Street
Sumter, SC 29150

FLOOD FACTS

Citizen's Guide Community Awareness

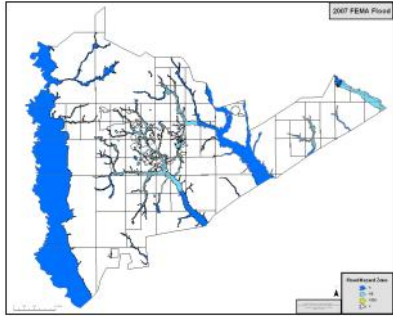


Sumter City/ County South Carolina

May 2010



Sumter City & Co. Flood Plain Map



Flood problems in Sumter City and County result mainly from riverine flooding caused by local thunderstorms, tropical storms and hurricanes, and from accumulations of floodwater in numerous depressions known as Carolina Bays. Some of these bays are drained by man-made ditches or culverts, and some are used for farming and residential and commercial development. Turkey Creek, Shot Pouch Creek, and Green Swamp are the major sources of flooding in the City of Sumter, although other tributaries contribute to the flooding problem. The headwaters of all major streams are located in or near the city, and intense local thunderstorms are the cause of much of the flooding in Sumter. Major floods in Sumter County occurred in 1945, 1954, 1959, 1964, and 1971.

City & County Flood Services

Flood maps and flood protection references are available at the Sumter County Libraries (111 N. Harvin St, 180 W. Wesmark & 337 Manning Avenue). You can also visit or contact the Sumter City-County Planning Commission office at 12 W. Liberty St., Sumter, SC, phone (803) 774-1660 to see if you are in a mapped floodplain. If so they can give

you more information, such as permit and elevation requirements.

You can also obtain flood information on our web site at www.sumtersc.gov

Flood Safety

There are several actions you can take to protect yourself and your loved ones:

- *Know the flood warning procedures
- *Plan escape route to high ground
- *During times of heavy rainfall, monitor water levels. Stay tuned to radio and TV to listen for flood warnings.
- *Keep children away from floodwaters, ditches, culverts and storm drains.
- *Do not attempt to cross a flooding stream on foot or by car.
- *If your car stalls in high water, abandon it immediately and seek higher ground.
- If you know a flood is coming you should shut off the gas and electricity and move valuable contents upstairs. It is unlikely that you will get much warning, so a detailed checklist prepared in advance would help ensure that you do not forget anything.
- *Turn off electricity and gas if evacuation is necessary.

Flood Insurance

If you do not have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from floods. However, because Sumter County and City participate in the National Flood Insurance Program, you can purchase a separate flood insurance policy. This insurance is backed by the Federal Government and is available to everyone, even for properties that have been flooded. Some people have purchased flood insurance because the bank required it when they got a mortgage or home improvement loan. Usually with

these policies there is usually more damage to the contents than the structure. If you are covered, check out the amount and make sure you have contents coverage. Remember, even if the last flood missed you or you have done some flood proofing, the next flood could be worse. Flood insurance covers all surface floods.

**** Don't wait for the next flood to buy insurance protection. There is a 30-day waiting period before National Flood Insurance Program coverage takes effect.**



Property Protection

There are several different ways to protect a building from flood damage. While recent improvements in construction practices and regulations have made new homes less prone to flood damage, there are a significant number of flood losses yearly. The flooding to these properties can be minimized through temporary and permanent retrofitting techniques. The following list is suggested—but remember to begin your project only *after* permits have been obtained:

- * One approach is to keep water away from your house by constructing a flood-wall or earthen berm. These methods are accepted if you have a large lot, if the flooding is not too deep, and if your property is not in the floodway.
- * Another approach is to waterproof

your walls and place watertight closures over the doorways. This method should be used on homes with basements or if water will not get over two feet deep.

- A third approach is to raise your house above the flood level, or to move it out of the floodplain. Houses built on slabs as well as on crawlspaces and pilings can be raised or moved with the assistance of a structural engineer certified in South Carolina. Contact your local Floodplain Manager for more information.

Floodplains have Natural and Beneficial Functions

Sumter City and County have natural floodplain areas such as Swan Lake Gardens and Dillon Park. The protected use of these lands and others within or near our floodplains are an important asset to our community. The undisturbed wetlands provide a wide range of benefits in the human and natural systems. It is important to leave these areas open so they can continue to act as natural flood controls. Water quality is improved as wetlands filter nutrients and impurities from runoff and to process organic wastes. These areas provide breeding and feeding grounds for fish and wildlife, create and enhance waterfront habitat, support a variety of beneficial plant growth, and maintain biodiversity and the integrity of the ecosystem. Floodplains provide green space for protection of streams from development impacts and the forces of erosion.

