Flood Facts

- Floods and flash floods happen in all 50 states.
- Everyone lives in a flood zone. (For more information, visit our Flood Zones FAQs.)
- Most homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage.
- If you live in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) or high-risk area and have a Federally backed mortgage, your mortgage lender requires you to have flood insurance. (To find your flood risk, fill out the Flood Risk Profile to the left.)
- Just an inch of water can cause costly damage to your property.
- Flash floods often bring walls of water 10 to 20 feet high.
- A car can easily be carried away by just two feet of floodwater.
- Hurricanes, winter storms and snowmelt are common (but often overlooked) causes of flooding.
- New land development can increase flood risk, especially if the construction changes natural runoff paths.
- Federal disaster assistance is usually a loan that must be paid back with interest. For a $50,000 loan at 4% interest, your monthly payment would be around $240 a month ($2,880 a year) for 30 years. Compare that to a $100,000 flood insurance premium, which is about $400 a year ($33 a month).
- If you live in a moderate-to-low risk area and are eligible for the Preferred Risk Policy, your flood insurance premium may be as low as $119 a year, including coverage for your property's contents.
- You are eligible to purchase flood insurance as long as your community participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. Check the Community Status Book to see if your community is already an NFIP partner.
- It takes 30 days after purchase for a policy to take effect, so it's important to buy insurance before the floodwaters start to rise.
- In a high-risk area, your home is more than twice as likely to be damaged by flood than by fire.
- Last year, about 25% of all claims paid by the NFIP were for policies in moderate-to-low risk communities.
- The average annual U.S. flood losses in the past 10 years (1994-2004) were more than $2.4 billion.
- When your community participates in the Community Rating System (CRS), you can qualify for an insurance premium discount of up to 45%. Read more about CRS Ratings.
- Since 1978, the NFIP has paid over $36 billion for flood insurance claims and related costs (as of 3/22/10).
- Over 5.5 million people currently hold flood insurance policies in more than 20,500 communities across the U.S.