



# Greenville County Flood Facts

**Local Flood Hazard:** Flooding in our County occurs in several areas including, but not limited to, Brushy Creek, Rocky Creek, Gilder Creek and Welcome Creek as well as the Reedy, Saluda and Enoree Rivers. This results in water leaving channel banks during or soon after heavy storms. Localized flooding can occur due to overloaded catch basins and storm drains. Floodwater may be as deep as two to three feet or higher. Basements, lower floors, garages, and cars may flood. Flooding in all areas can come with little to no warning. If you live in one of these affected areas, you should be particularly alert for rising water during storm watches or warnings.



Light Blue and Green are known flood hazard areas  
Maroon represents drainage areas with unknown flood hazards

**County Flood Services:** The first thing you should do is to check your proximity to a flood hazard. You may call (864-467-7523) or visit the Floodplain Administrator - Codes Enforcement Division at County Square (Suite 4100) to determine if you are in a FEMA mapped flood hazard area. FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) may also be found on the County's GIS website ([www.gcgis.org](http://www.gcgis.org)) under the FEMA layer. If you are in a regulated area, base ("100-yr") flood elevations (BFE) may be available. Also, flood protection references are available at the Greenville County Public Library in the South Carolina Room. These services are free. FEMA Elevation Certificates, if required, are also available for

review. More information regarding flooding and floodplain regulation can be found online at: [http://www.greenvillecounty.org/Codes\\_Enforcement/floodplain.asp](http://www.greenvillecounty.org/Codes_Enforcement/floodplain.asp)

**Flood Insurance:** If you don't have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from floods. However, because Greenville County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), 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 their lender required it when they got a mortgage or home improvement loan. Usually these policies cover the building's structure only and not the contents. Of the total damages incurred since 1984, over one-third was due to damage to furniture and contents. If you are covered, you may want to check the amount and make sure you have contents coverage. Flood insurance typically covers all surface floods.

Visit [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov) for more information.

**Flood Warning:** The National Weather Service along with the Greenville County Emergency Management Agency, provide flood warning and evacuation data to local radio (WFBC, WROQ, WTPT) and television (WHNS, WSPA, WLOS, WYFF) stations. Greenville County Sheriff's Office and area Fire Departments will provide door-to-door warnings to those areas threatened by flooding, when evacuations are ordered in areas expected to flood. Residents should be prepared to move to a place of safety. The County of Greenville in conjunction with the Greenville County Office of Emergency Management will announce emergency shelter locations.

**Property Protection Measures:** Every year, flooding in the United States causes more property damage than any other type of natural disaster. While recent improvements in construction practices and regulations have made new homes less prone to flood damage, there are many existing homes susceptible to flood losses. Flooding of these properties can be minimized through temporary and permanent retrofitting techniques.

## Greenville County Flood Facts (Continued)

- One approach is to raise your home above the flood level.
- Additional measures to minimize potential flood damage include retrofitting; grading a yard; correcting local drainage problems; and, emergency measures such as moving furniture and sandbagging.

**Flood Safety:** Do not walk through flowing water. Drowning is the number one cause of flood deaths, mostly during flash floods. Currents can be deceptive; six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. If you must walk in standing water, use a stick or pole to ensure that the ground is still there.

Do not drive through a flooded area. More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. Don't drive around road barriers; the road or bridge may be washed out. Stay away from power lines and electrical wires. The number two flood killer, after drowning, is electrocution. Electrical current can travel through water. Please report downed power lines to the local power company. Have your electricity turned off by your power company. Some appliances, such as television sets, keep electrical charges even after they have been unplugged. Be alert for gas leaks. Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Don't smoke or use candles, lanterns, or open flames, unless you know the gas has been turned off and the area has been ventilated.

**Drainage System Maintenance:** Greenville County has a drainage system inspection and maintenance program. The Public Works Department routinely conducts inspections on right-of-way ditches. Debris, even grass clippings, in ditches may obstruct the flow of water and cause overflow into the streets, yards, and homes. Greenville County Code Section 9-124 makes it illegal to take any action that will impede the flow of water in rights-of-way or dumping of debris into any right-of-way. If you see any violations please contact a litter officer at 864-371-3645.

The Greenville County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance regulates encroachments into the 1% Special Flood Hazard Area. Contact the Floodplain Administrator at 864-467-7523 if you plan a project that may require a floodplain review.

**Permit Requirements:** *All development* in regulated flood hazard areas requires a permit (not just the

construction of a building). You must contact the Floodplain Administrator before you start any development in the 1% Special Flood Hazard Area.

Greenville County requires that if the cost of reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvements to a building located in the 1% Special Flood Hazard Area equals or exceed 50% of the building's fair market value, then the building must meet the same construction requirements as a new building. These "substantially improved" buildings must be repaired to conform to the elevation requirements of the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

**Natural and Beneficial Functions:** Greenville County is a beautiful place to live and the areas within or near our special flood hazard areas are important assets. The undisturbed wetlands provide a wide range of benefits in the human and natural systems. Water quality is improved through the wetlands ability to filter nutrients and impurities from runoff and process organic wastes. These areas provide breeding and feeding ground for fish and wildlife, create and enhance waterfowl habitat, support a high rate of plant growth and maintain biodiversity and the integrity of the ecosystem. Floodplains provide green space for protection of streams from development and the forces of erosion.

**Repetitive Loss:** A repetitive loss structure is a building covered by a contract of flood insurance issued under the NFIP, that has suffered flood damage on two occasions during a 10-year period that ends on the date of the second loss, in which the cost to repair the flood damage, on average, equaled or exceeded 25% of the market value of the structure at the time of each flood loss.

County Council has put into place a flood mitigation program to assist homeowners with elevation of their dwellings in an attempt to alleviate repeated flooding. This program consists of a grant from the County that will pay up to \$7,500 towards the elevation of an owner-occupied dwelling. For more information please contact the Floodplain Administrator.