



PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Department | 100 S. Hill Street-P.O. Box T | Griffin, GA 30224
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Even though the City of Griffin (City) is not located near a major river, there are still areas of the City that lie within a floodplain and have the potential to flood. Along sections of Shoal, Cabin and Grape Creeks and Ison Branch exists floodplains which are low lying areas that are prone to flooding during periods of heavy rain. The last major flood to hit Griffin occurred during 1994 when flood waters disrupted essential government services, damaged critical structures and caused transportation delays due to flooded streets. Since then, the City has taken steps to reduce the impacts from flooding.

Floodplains are natural areas that help reduce flood water velocities which, allows water to slow down and sediment to drop out of the water, improving the water quality of the City. The sediment that drops out of water has nutrients and other pollutants attached to it that plants can take up and use, further aiding water quality. In addition to slowing down the velocity of flood waters, the floodplain also allows water to slowly filter through the ground which further reduces the volume of stormwater. Placing fill in the floodplain reduces their ability to hold flood waters and is not allowed. These areas are very important to reduce the volume and improve the quality of flood waters. Floodplains are very effective at treating flood water and the use of floodplain is much more cost effective than building structures to hold and treat stormwater. The largest connected floodplain within City limits is along Grape Creek west of Macon Rd. near the intersection with E. College St. and along Ison Branch near the intersections of Maple Dr. with Wesley Rd. and 4 Oaks Dr.

If your home is within a floodplain, it is important to take steps to protect your property from flooding. There are methods to permanently retrofit structures to help protect them from flooding. The most common ways to retrofit residential structures are to elevate the structure or wet-proof the structure. Buildings can be anchored to prevent floatation and sometimes walls can be strengthened to withstand the pressure of flood waters or the impact from floating objects on commercial properties. Property owners can also either raise electrical and HVAC systems so that they are above the floodplain or HVAC systems can be flood proofed to prevent damage. If there is a propane or other fuel tank on your property, they should be properly anchored into the ground so they cannot float away in flood waters and cause damage to nearby structures. In addition to outside damages, heavy rains can cause sewage to back up into basements of homes, even in areas outside of the floodplain. A floor drain plug, standpipe, or sewer backup valve can prevent sewer backup flooding and can be purchased at a hardware store for under \$30.

One of the most important steps that can be taken to protect your home and your belongings is to purchase **Flood Insurance**. Homeowner insurance policies do not cover damages from flooding and additional policies need to be purchased. However, because the City is now a Class 5 community in the Community Rating System, everyone can purchase a separate flood insurance policy backed by the Federal government at a reduced rate, even if their property has flooded before. Some people have purchased flood insurance because it was required by the bank when they got a mortgage or home improvement loan but these policies usually just cover the building's structure and not the contents. Under most circumstances, it takes 30 days to write a flood insurance policy so, planning is essential for proper protection. More information on flood insurance is available at <http://www.FloodSmart.gov>. If you don't have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent or call (1-800-CALL-FLOOD, 1-800-225-5356).

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In times of flooding it is very important to put safety first. Turn off the gas and electricity to your home to help reduce the potential of additional damages. Move valuable paperwork and objects to higher elevations in your home (second floor or on top of shelves). Bring any outdoor items such as lawn furniture and toys inside your home or garage so, they do not become a floating hazard and possibly clog storm drains or creeks. Stay clear of all power lines and electrical wires. If you are going to leave your home, be sure to bring all necessary medication with you. While leaving your home, be cautious of flood waters and limit walking or driving through flood waters. Six inches of flowing flood water has the potential to knock over a person and only two feet of water is enough to float a vehicle and wash it downstream.

The disposing of any material that is not 100 percent stormwater down a storm drain or directly into a creek or stream within the City of Griffin is against City Ordinances. Even materials such as grass clippings, leaves or fallen branches have the potential to increase the severity of floods by clogging the creek or reducing the volume of water that can be carried down the creek. If your property is along a ditch or creek, please do your part and inspect your property and keep the banks clear of fallen woody debris. If you ever see someone dumping anything into a creek or storm drain or if you find large debris dams in a creek, please contact the Stormwater Department at 770-229-6424.

The City pays special attention to any potential development and redevelopment within the floodplain. Before any development or improvement to your property (building of any structure or grading) can start the Planning and Zoning Department should be contacted to ensure there are no permits required. Permits are required in some instances to prevent losses to downstream properties from increased flood waters. In the case of redevelopment, any “substantial improvement”, including repairs to a structure with “substantial damage”, is subjected to the same requirements as new buildings. A “substantial improvement” or “substantial damage” is defined as any building where any combination of repairs, reconstruction, alteration, or improvements to a building, taking place during a 10-year period, in which the cumulative cost equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the building prior to the improvements. If you notice any building or development of any type without a City permit sign posted, contact the Planning and Zoning Department at 770-233-4130.

City personnel are available to make site visits, free of charge, to assist City of Griffin residents in flood protection, drainage issues and any site specific flooding issues within the City of Griffin. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) released new digital flood insurance rate maps (DFIRM) in May 2010. These new DFIRM publications show where the 100 year floodplain is and if your property is at an elevated risk of flooding. Please to remember that flood waters cannot read a map and even if your home is not located within the floodplain there could still be a risk of flooding. The City’s Geographic Information Services Division has the capabilities to produce maps of the Community depicting structures and the 100 year flood plain to assist in determining if your home is located within the floodplain. If you need information, we can help provide you with it. We would welcome your call, email or visit to our offices. We can help provide you with flood information such as basic FIRM information, flood depth and natural floodplain functions. If you would like any additional information on flooding, historical flooding, repetitive loss, flood insurance, flood zones, retrofitting your home to protect from flooding, assistance in determining if your home is in the 100 year floodplain or if you would like to obtain an elevation certificate please check out the Flint River regional Library, our website <http://www.cityofgriffin.com/Departments/PublicWorks/FloodplainManagement.aspx>, or call the City of Griffin Stormwater Department at 770-229-6424.

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