

All about flooding in Trinidad and Tobago

**A SURVIVAL GUIDE TO HELP YOU PLAN,
PREPARE AND PROTECT YOUR FAMILY**



Rainy Season Safety Booklet



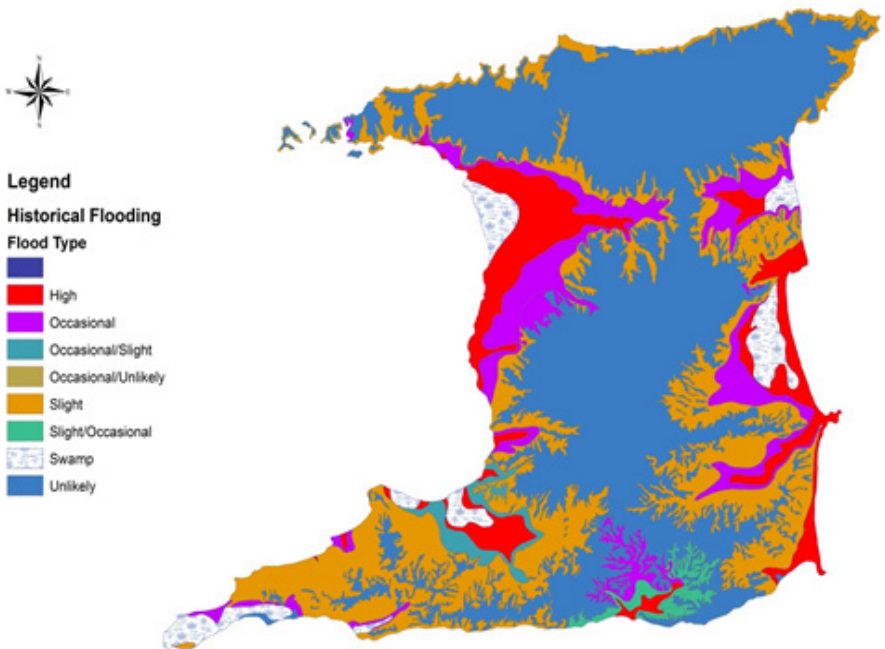
FLOODING IN TRINIDAD

Forest fires in Portugal, the declining levels of the salmon that were once abundant in the Atlantic, heat warnings and tornado watches in North America, the significant ice surface melt on the Antarctic ice sheet. All of these environmental factors point toward climate change and the consequences handed to us around the world; and such repercussions occur here in Trinidad and Tobago with the increase in rainfall over the years and the result of numerous floods.



Map of Trinidad Flood Areas

**THIS MAP OUTLINES THE AREAS THAT EXPERIENCE A HIGH
PROBABILITY OF FLOODING IN TRINIDAD,
PLEASE REFER TO THE KEY.**



Safety is the key_____

Flooding is a temporary overflow of water onto land that is normally dry. Floods are the most common natural disaster in Trinidad and Tobago. Failing to evacuate flooded areas, entering flood waters, or remaining after a flood has passed can result in injury or death. Floods may:

- Result from rain, coastal storms and storm surges.
- Develop slowly or quickly – Flash floods can come with no warning.
- Cause outages, disrupt transportation, damage buildings, and create landslides.

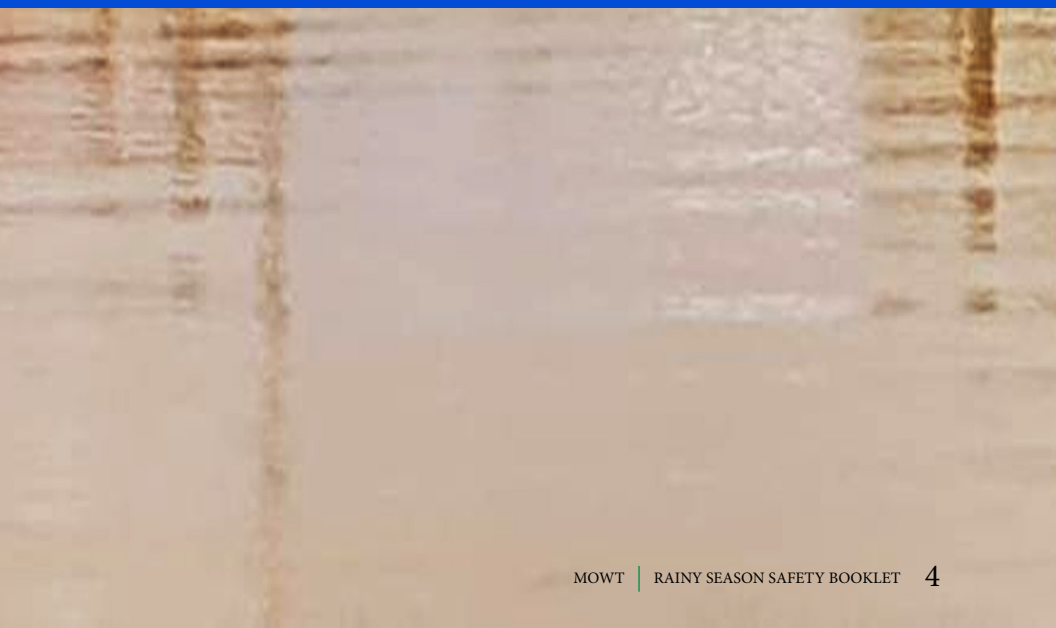
IF YOU ARE UNDER A FLOOD WARNING,
FIND SAFE SHELTER RIGHT AWAY

- Do not walk, play, swim, or drive through flood waters. **Turn Around!**
 - Just six inches of moving water can knock you down, and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away.
- Stay off of bridges over fast-moving water.
- Determine how best to protect yourself based on the type of flooding.
 - Evacuate if told to do so.
 - Move to higher ground or a higher floor.
 - Stay where you are.





FIGURE 1: WE UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING THE BEST OUT OF A BAD SITUATION. BUT THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT YOU DON'T WANT TO DO. PLAYING IN FLOOD WATERS IS DETRIMENTAL TO YOUR HEALTH AS YOU CAN CONTRACT WATER BORNE DISEASES OR GET INJURIES FROM FLOATING OBJECTS



Start Preparing Today_____

WE CAN'T STOP NATURAL DISASTERS. BUT WHEN WE FAIL TO PREPARE FOR THEIR PASSING, WE CREATE EVEN MORE MISFORTUNE IN THE AFTERMATH.

If you don't already have one, start assembling a Survival Kit now while you can easily gather everything you need. That way, if that act of nature ever arrives, you can take comfort in the fact that you already have the basic items you will need to get you through.



Survival Kits Preparation

STOCK UP ON FOOD AND WATER FOR 3-7 DAYS

This includes non-perishable packaged or canned foods. Be sure to have at least one gallon per person, or enough water to last 3- 7 days in your household.



Start Preparing Today_____

FIRST AID KIT

IN THE EVENT THAT YOU OR YOUR LOVED ONES SUFFER BODILY HARM, A FIRST AID KIT CAN BE EXTREMELY USEFUL. BE SURE TO INCLUDE ANY IMPORTANT MEDICATIONS THAT YOU NEED TO TAKE.



Flashlights and batteries

IN MAJOR FLOODS, THE ELECTRICITY CAN GO OUT, WHICH CAN MAKE IT DANGEROUS TO NAVIGATE AT NIGHT. BE SURE TO CARRY MULTIPLE WORKING FLASHLIGHTS WITH BACKUP BATTERIES, AS THEY MAY COME IN HANDY.



Cash

BANKS AND ATMS MAY NOT BE OPEN DURING A MAJOR FLOOD, SO IT'S IMPERATIVE THAT YOU HAVE ENOUGH CASH TO LAST 3-7 DAYS. THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IF YOU'RE EVACUATING THE AREA.

ALL CASH SHOULD BE
SECURED IN PLASTIC BAGS TO PREVENT WATER DAMAGE.



When you Expect a Flood

SECURE YOUR PERSONAL DOCUMENTS

ENSURE ALL DOCUMENTS (DEEDS, ID CARDS, PASSPORTS, AFFIDAVITS, BIRTH CERTIFICATES ETC.) ARE SECURED FROM WATER DAMAGE



When you Expect a Flood

FLOOD-PROOF YOUR ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

COVER OR RAISE ANY OPEN SOCKETS, SWITCHES, CIRCUIT
BREAKERS AND WIRING.



When you Expect a Flood

PROTECT YOUR HOUSEHOLD'S EQUIPMENT

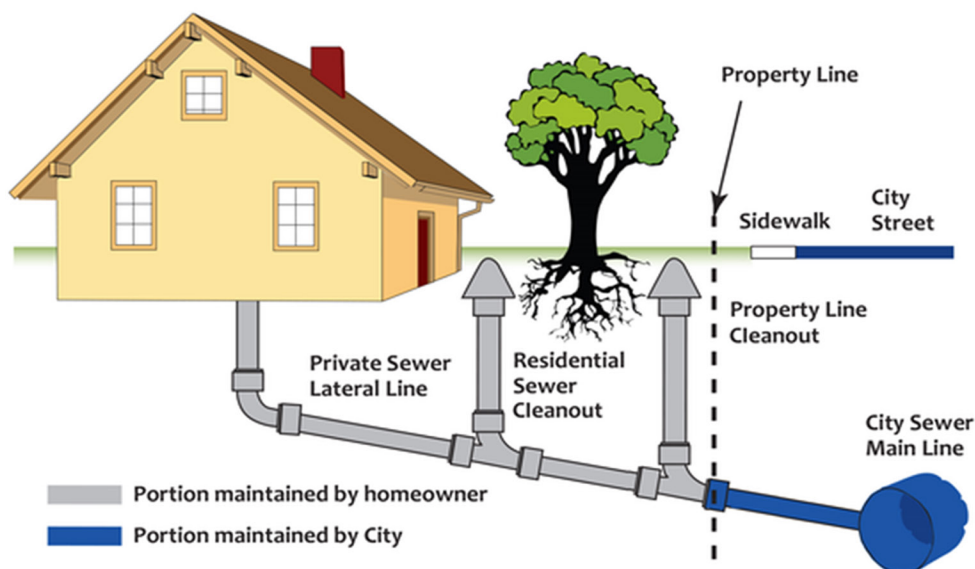
CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONING UNITS AND GENERAL EQUIPMENT CAN BE VULNERABLE TO FLOODS BECAUSE THEY ARE USUALLY POSITIONED AT THE LOWEST LEVEL OF A HOME. IF POSSIBLE, CONSIDER ELEVATING YOUR HOME'S EQUIPMENT ABOVE GROUND LEVEL TO A HIGHER FLOOR. IF YOU HAVE ANY OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT, YOU WILL NEED TO HAVE IT ANCHORED AND ELEVATED AS WELL. WHETHER YOU HIRE SOMEONE, OR YOU DO IT YOURSELF, ENSURE THAT YOU CONSULT WITH YOUR INSURANCE AGENCY BEFORE YOU MAKE THESE ADJUSTMENTS



When you Expect a Flood

MINIMIZE SEWAGE WATER BACKUP BY REGULARLY CLEARING YOUR SEWER

IF YOUR HOME'S SEWER SYSTEM IS BACKED UP, SEWAGE CAN INVADE YOUR HOME DURING A FLOOD. TO PREVENT THIS, INSTALL AN INTERIOR OR EXTERIOR BACKFLOW VALVE. THESE BACKFLOW VALVES WILL REMOVE SOME OF THE PRESSURE THAT'S ON THE SEWER MAINLINES. CONTACT YOUR LOCAL SEWAGE COMPANIES TO CLEAN BEFORE A FLOOD.





SAFEGUARD ALL PETS AND LIVESTOCK

**KEEP TREES
AROUND
YOUR HOME
TRIMMED
WELL BEFORE
A STORM TO
PREVENT
DAMAGE
FROM
BROKEN
BRANCHES.**

**CLEAR
LOOSE AND
CLOGGED
DRAINS,
GUTTERS
AND DOWN-
SPOUTS**

**FILL &
PRE-
POSITION
SANDBAGS IF
YOU LIVE IN A
FLOOD-
PRONE
AREA**

First responders are there to help: keep these numbers close

HERE IS A LISTING OF FIRST RESPONDERS BY REGIONAL CORPORATION. IF YOU ARE TRAPPED, INJURED OR HAVE EXPERIENCED DAMAGE TO YOUR PROPERTY, THE ASSIGNED OFFICERS IN EACH AREA ARE READY TO ASSIST AND RESPOND TO ANY COMPLAINTS OF DAMAGE OR LOSS TO PROPERTY, FALLEN TREES, AFFECTED POWER LINES AND OTHER EMERGENCIES.

CONTACT US

Regional Corporation (Disaster Management Unit)	Hotline Numbers
Diego Martin Regional Corporation	800-DMRC (3672)
San Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation	800-SLRC (7572)
Arima Borough Corporation	800-2ABC (2222)
Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation	800-TPRC (8772)
Port-of-Spain City Corporation	800-PSCC (7722)
Sangre Grande Regional Corporation	800-SGRC (7472)
Chaguanas Borough Corporation	800-DCBC (3222)
Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation	800-CTTC (2882)
Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation	800-4MRC (4672)
Princes Town Regional Corporation	800-PTRC (7872)
Point Fortin Borough Corporation	800-PFCB (7322)
San Fernando City Corporation	800-SCDU (7238)
Penal/Debe Regional Corporation	800-PDRC (7372)
Siparia Regional Corporation	800-4SRC (4772)

Evacuating to an Emergency Shelter

YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DECIDING IF THE COMMUNITY SHOULD EVACUATE. IF A SITUATION IS SO SEVERE THAT YOU NEED TO LEAVE YOUR HOME TO REMAIN SAFE, YOU WILL HEAR ANNOUNCEMENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY OR VIA THE MEDIA.

SUPPLIES TO BRING TO A SHELTER

If you go to a public shelter, you should bring at least a three (3) day supply of the following:-

FOOD & WATER:

Bring any special dietary foods, snacks, bottled water and non-perishable canned or packaged food

MEDICATION:

Bring prescriptions, glasses and contacts, durable medical equipment and any over-the-counter medications you would normally take.

CLOTHING:

Bring a complete change of clothes and sturdy footwear.

BEDDING: This include blankets and sleeping bags.

HYGIENE ITEMS:

Bring sanitizer, toothbrush, toothpaste and sanitary items.

IMPORTANT PAPERS:

This includes ID, proof of residency and any important papers.

CASH:

ATM's may be out of order during an event.

ENTERTAINMENT ITEMS:

This includes puzzles, toys for children and reading material.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Battery-powered radio, First-Aid Kit, flashlight, and spare batteries.

Special items for infants, disabled or elderly family members.

NOTE:

Remember, alcohol, weapons and pets are not permitted in public shelters. For younger kids, you should also ensure you have extra diapers as they may not be able to wait.

Emergency Numbers

CONTACT US

Global Medical Response of Trinidad and Tobago	
– (GMRTT) (Ambulance)	811
Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management	800-ODPM (6376)
Emergency	911
Police Rapid Response	999
Fire Service	990
Crime Stoppers	800-TIPS (8477)
Anti-Crime Hotline	555
Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission	800-TTEC (8832)
Water and Sewage Authority Telecommunications	800-4H2O (4420)
Services of Trinidad & Tobago	824-TSTT (8788)
Tobago Emergency Relief	211

Assistance for Recovery after a Flood

**THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY SERVICES OFFERS A HOST OF SERVICES TO VICTIMS OF NATURAL OR MAN-MADE DISASTERS UPON COMPLETION OF A NEEDS ASSESSMENT ARE AS FOLLOWS:
WHO WE ARE :**

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services (MSDFS) is a primary strategic partner with the Government to nurture the society envisaged. The Ministry must play a critical lead role through supportive social policy; coordination of the social sector and the delivery of essential high-quality social services.

The Ministry's work is guided by Trinidad and Tobago's National Development Strategy 2016-2030 (vision 2030), which advocates for attaining developed country status by the year 2030. The plan proposes five overarching key result area or themes in pursuit of the vision:

- Putting People First: Nurturing Our Greatest Asset;
- Promoting Good Governance and Service Excellence;
- Improving Productivity through Quality Infrastructure and Transportation;
- Building Globally Competitive Business; and;
- Placing the Environment at the Centre of Socio-economic Development.

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services Head Office is located on St. Vincent Street, Port of Spain, in the CL Building.

MINISTRY HEAD OFFICE

Colonial Life Building, 39-43, St Vincent Street, Port-of-Spain
Telephone: (868) 623-2608

Caring for your Vehicle After a Flood

If your area has been flooded, you will need to pay special attention to your vehicle. If your vehicle was immersed in water for more than halfway up its wheels, or if you see a line of mud and debris indicating that the water had reached that height, you'll need to take certain precautions. Starting the vehicle when there is water in the engine, fuel system, or transmission will only make the problem worse. You can read more about flooded vehicles below.



DON'T START YOUR VEHICLE

Firstly, do not attempt to start your vehicle. It may be tempting to turn the key and see if the vehicle still works, but if there is water in the engine, the vehicle can be damaged beyond repair, rendering your vehicle unusable. Be Patient, it will save you further damage in the long run.

EVALUATE THE DAMAGE

If the floodwaters were more than a few feet deep, you should check your vehicle for water damage as soon as it's safe to do so. First, look at the depth of the water - or for evidence of a water line left by mud and debris surrounding your vehicle.

Water that didn't rise above the bottom of the doors is unlikely to have caused significant damage. If the water reached the bottom of the dashboard, contact a mechanic or your insurance company for advice.

CONTACT A TOW TRUCK TO TRANSPORT YOUR VEHICLE TO YOUR HOME OR A MECHANIC.

REVIEW YOUR INSURANCE POLICY

Contact your insurance company immediately to report flood damage to your vehicle. Flood damage is most likely to be covered by a comprehensive policy that covers fire and theft. However, be sure to read it thoroughly to understand what your insurance company will and will not repair or replace.

CHECK THE OIL

Check engine with oil dipstick to see if water entered; oil level would have increased and its colour changed. Water droplets on the dipstick indicate a potential problem. If you see this, don't try to start the vehicle. The droplets mean that water may have gotten into your engine.

ASSESS THE ADDITIONAL VEHICLE FEATURES

Test your vehicle's electrical components for damage. Try the headlights, power locks, turn signals, windows and seats, air conditioning, interior lights, and stereo. Any part that seems to function differently than it did before the flood indicates potential electrical trouble. If you detect a problem, take the vehicle to a mechanic.

START CLEANING

Cleaning a vehicle out after a flood or after water damage can be tricky. Start drying the interior to reduce the risk of mold growth and corrosion. Open the vehicle doors and windows to air it out, and put a towel on the floor to soak up the water in the cabin. Dry the remaining fluid on the carpet and upholstery with a wet/dry vacuum. If possible, bring the seats and cushions outside to dry. Fans and dehumidifiers can help speed the process. Wipe down all of the hard surfaces with soap and hot water.

If possible, set up a fan on one side of the vehicle and open the doors, this will allow the air to move through the entire vehicle.

MANAGE THE ODOUR

Once you have aired out the vehicle and removed all of the water, you should do a thorough shampoo and dry everything that was affected by the water damage. It may seem counterintuitive to get the vehicle wet again by shampooing it, but using soap will help kill lingering bacteria and make the vehicle smell much better. Just be sure that everything is completely dry when you are finished.

Call to Action

- Discuss what you have done to prepare with your family, friends, neighbours, and colleagues.
- Talking about preparedness with others will help you think through your plans, share information about alerts and warnings, and share tips for protecting property.
- Talking about disasters and helping others prepare makes everyone safer.
- Closely monitor the radio, TV, social media and other media for weather alerts, watches and warnings.
- Avoid the indiscriminate dumping of solid waste, illegal land development.
- Be Responsible! Do Not Litter.



“Let’s Work Together to Prevent Flooding Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow”



Connecting People

Connecting Communities

Connecting a Nation

www.mowt.gov.tt follow us on:

