

Our storm drainage systems work by filtering the runoff ground, as shown in the diagram.

This keeps the pollution found in the runoff from going into our rivers, canals, bay and ocean. It is therefore very important that nothing but rainwater enter these systems. Litter, leaves and debris can clog the system and cause flooding and other problems for the community.

1. Rainwater enters the storm drain inlet.
2. Rainwater goes into perforated pipe.
3. Rainwater filters out of pipe into porous rock and filter.
4. Rainwater filters through rock and then enters groundwater.



Private drainage systems

If you live in a condominium, private community with an association, or if your place of business is located in a commercial property such as a warehouse or shopping mall, then you should become familiar with the drainage system in your private community and/or place of business. Specifically, you should be aware of the location, condition and operation of the on-site drainage system that your homeowner's association or place of business is responsible for maintaining. It is also a good idea to develop a list of important contact persons/phone numbers associated with the maintenance of the drainage system BEFORE an emergency arises.

Did you know that it is **ILLEGAL** to throw away or discharge anything into the rivers, canals, lakes, bays or any water body? Nothing but rainwater is allowed to be discharged into the storm drains located in the streets, curbs and parking lots.

Help us keep the waters and streets of our City clean! If you witness dumping of any liquid or materials into storm drains or waters of the City, please call Miami Dade 311 or 304-455-6585 to report those activities.



**Do you know the risks?
Important new
developments
for you to know!**

We want to hear from you!

The City of Sweetwater is in the process of updating its Floodplain Management Plan, and we would like to hear from you to be sure we are meeting your needs. Please see the following questions and respond by calling our Flood Complaints Hotline, from 8am to 4pm, Monday through Friday, at 455-6585.

We would like to know:

- Do you have flooding problems in your neighborhood or at your place of business?
- If so, have you notified the County, and if you did, was our response satisfactory?
- Have you noticed the drainage improvements being constructed by the City of Sweetwater? Have they helped reduce flooding in your local community?
- Do you have ideas on how we can better reduce



**Public Works Department
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E-mail: publicworks@cityofsweetwater.fl.gov



**Find your home's
flood zone!**

To find the flood zone for your property, you have a few easy options:

» Visit our webpage at web <http://www.cityofsweetwater.fl.gov> under Public Works/Flood Information/Flood Insurance Rate Maps .

» Call the Flood Zone Hotline during regular office hours at 305-455-6585 or FEMA at 1-877-FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627), from Monday to Friday 8 am to 6:30 pm.

» Visit the following web pages:
<https://msc.fema.gov/portal>
<http://gisweb.miamidade.gov/floodzone>



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Floodplains are our friends!

Did you know that rainfall is an important part of the ecology of South Florida? Rainfall drains into floodplains such as the Everglades and our many wetlands, filters through these areas, and is eventually stored underground. Underground water is the only source of drinking and domestic water supply in South Florida. It is important that we protect and maintain these drainage areas; the quality of our drinking water depends on it!

Flood insurance is required for any federally backed mortgage in a Special Flood Hazard Area. PLEASE NOTE when purchasing flood insurance, the policy does not go into effect until 30 days after purchase. Please visit <http://www.floodsmart.gov> for the most current information on flood insurance premiums and to locate a flood insurance agent in your area.

Because of the rating under the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System, The City of Sweetwater policy holders who live in a flood zone have enjoyed a 5 percent discount on their flood insurance premiums .

All hands on deck!

When an Emergency Flood Warning Notice is issued for your area, take safety precautions immediately. Listed below are some guidelines to follow:

- »» Do not walk or drive through flowing or standing water. Unseen obstructions or hazards may harm you or your vehicle. Also, sewage from overflowing sewer lines may be present in the water.
- »» Avoid downed power lines and electrical wires. These lines can cause shock and electrocution.
- »» Turn off the power in your house. This should include electrical power as well as all propane gas tanks and lines.
- »» Watch your step in flooded areas. Slip and fall accidents are common in wet, slippery areas.
- »» Be alert for small animals that are flushed out by flooding conditions. Remember, under stress, animals may react by biting when disturbed.
- »» Be aware of gas leaks in the house. Do not smoke, nor use candles or open flames until you are sure no leaks exist; ventilate enclosed areas if you think gas is present.
- »» Please visit the Red Cross website at <http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/flood> for more information.

Elevation Certificates

Once you have determined that your house lies in a flood zone, an Elevation Certificate can then tell you how high your house was built in relation to that flood zone.

These Certificates are required for all new construction, as well as for construction projects that involve making substantial improvements to a structure.

An Elevation Certificate is an important document that every homeowner should have, and in case of a disaster, would demonstrate to City authorities that your house is at or above the required elevation.

If the Certificate shows that your house is lower than the required elevation, then the so-called "50% rule" would apply to your house. This rule means that if your house is in a flood zone and is damaged and/or improved to an amount greater than 50% of its market value, it will have to be raised to meet the current elevation requirement.

Protect your property!

There are things you can do to minimize or eliminate property damage before a flood event occurs.

Grading your property, elevating and securing electrical appliances, placing all lowlying electrical fixtures on separate electrical circuits, and using flood resistant materials on exterior surfaces are some ways you can help yourself. Under emergency conditions, sandbags can be used to protect structures from flood waters, and elevating or covering furniture and valuables can help minimize damage.

To reduce street flooding, the City of Sweetwater keeps on identifying, prioritizing and implementing local drainage projects throughout the City.

The Stormwater Utility also provides flood protection assistance to citizens, in the form of site visits and advice on how to protect your property from flooding. Please call 455-6585 to report any unusual flooding in your area or to request a site visit for your property.



Understanding your flood zones



To identify a community's flood risk, FEMA conducts a Flood Insurance Study. The study includes information on canal and stream flows, storm tides, hydrologic/hydraulic analyses, and rainfall and topographic surveys. FEMA uses this data to create the flood hazard maps – the Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs) that outline your community's different flood risk areas. FEMA periodically updates those maps.

Here are the definitions for all the flood zone designations shown in the City of Sweetwater's DFIRMs:

ZONE AE (Moderate to High Flooding Risk)

This is the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds with flood depths greater than three feet. Mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements apply.

ZONE AH (Moderate to High Flooding Risk)

This is the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to areas of shallow flooding with average depths between one and three feet. Mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements apply.

ZONE X (Low Risk)

The X zone is the area of moderate flood hazard, usually the area between the limits of the 100- year and 500-year floods. B Zones are also used to designate base floodplains of lesser hazards, such as areas protected by levees from 100-year flood, or shallow flooding areas with average depths of less than one foot or drainage areas less than 1 square mile. Buying insurance is not required in these areas.