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## City of Tulsa 1996

### *Official Notice*

## Flood hazard information

***Your property is located within the City of Tulsa Regulatory Floodplain boundary, and may be included in a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area. What does that mean for you? Read on.***

Tulsa is located in one of the most scenic natural areas of Oklahoma. Unfortunately, many locations within the city have suffered repeated flood damages when torrential storms strike. Some of these areas are not in a designated floodplain.

In the 1970s and 80s, Tulsa County had the most federal disaster declarations in the nation. In 1984, a flash flood in the City of Tulsa resulted in \$180 million in damages and 14 deaths.

The accompanying map shows local creeks that periodically have flash floods. The flash floods usually have high velocities and are extremely dangerous. Flood damages have been caused at

various times by all these creeks and most of their tributaries including Valley View, Flat Rock, Dirty Butter, Bird, Coal, Mingo, Haikey, Fry, Vensel, Fred, Joe, Hager, Nickel, Mooser, Cherry-Red Fork, Perryman, Crow, Elm, Park View, Oak, Harlow, and Blackboy.

### **Flood insurance is available in Tulsa.**

Most homeowner's policies do not cover flood losses. You can protect your home and its contents through the National Flood Insurance Program. You should obtain coverage for structure and contents. There can be more damage to the contents than the structure. Renters can buy contents coverage even if the owner does not

insure the structure. There is a 30-day waiting period before the policy becomes effective.

Flood insurance is required by law in order to obtain federally secured financing to buy, build, or renovate a structure located in a flood hazard area. This financing includes federal grants, FHA and VA loans, and most conventional mortgage loans.

To find out more about flood insurance, contact any licensed property/casualty agent or broker--the same person who sells your home and auto policies. All agencies charge the same premiums.

### **Tulsa's natural floodplains**

Many local floodplains have been preserved for recreational activities and as wetland habitat for wildlife but they can still be treacherous during heavy rainfall. This map can guide you to natural parks and playgrounds; however, it also indicates areas where floodwater can be hazardous. Avoid entering these areas when flooding is occurring.

A beautiful natural area, Red Bud Valley, has been preserved and is open to the public, in conjunction with the City of Tulsa and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mingo Creek Flood Control Project. Also, several drainage improvements include planting of special water plants and grasses to improve their natural functions of wildlife habitat and filtering nutrients and impurities from water are included in Mingo Creek.

### **You can protect your property**

Floodproofing buildings can help reduce the potential for flood damages to structures and their contents. A building permit may be required for this type of work. If your property is located where you can safely implement floodproofing, it could pay to investigate your options. Several informative brochures may be checked out at your library and copies can be obtained free from FEMA.

You may consider raising your house above flood levels, or you may want to keep water away by regrading your lot or building a small floodwall or earthen dam. Also, ask your plumber about a

valve to prevent sewer back-up. These measures are often called retrofitting. Keep materials like sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting and lumber handy for emergency waterproofing. And remember that drainage ditches perform much better when kept clear of brush and debris.

City staff is available to discuss specific details with you during normal business hours - call the Mayor's Action Center, 596-2100, for assistance.

### **Permits are required before you build**

A floodplain watershed development permit must be obtained from the City of Tulsa before commencing construction, landfill, or excavation in the floodplain. Any activity outside the floodplain but within a natural or man-made watercourse also requires a permit.

For a free flood-zone determination, contact the Mayor's Action Center with the correct address or legal description of the property. A written determination will be mailed to you. Also, detailed floodplain boundary maps are on file in City Hall, the Central Library, and four regional libraries throughout the city.

New buildings in the floodplain must be protected from flood damage. Our building code requires that new buildings must be elevated one foot above the base or "100-year" flood. No construction, including filling, is allowed in the mapped floodway without an engineering analysis that shows the project will not increase flood damage elsewhere.

Before you begin construction or add on to your existing building, contact the Mayor's Action Center, 596-2100. Qualified staff can help you build a safe project and comply with local floodplain policies. This information could not only save you time and money - it could save your life.

## Cleaner creeks: You can help

Drainage systems are maintained regularly to help prevent water from backing up into streets and homes. If you spot a blocked drain or see development occurring in a flood zone and you think it could potentially create problems, call 596-2100 and an inspector will investigate the problem.

Don't pour used motor oil, antifreeze, old pesticides or any other pollutants down the storm drainage system. All storm sewers in Tulsa drain to the Arkansas River or Bird Creek and are monitored regularly for compliance with Tulsa's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. Putting foreign substances into this system can also cause flooding, and is a violation of City ordinance punishable by fines of up to \$100 a day.

## Listen for flood sirens

Emergency sirens are located in neighborhoods throughout Tulsa. When flooding is expected in your area, the emergency sirens will be activated. For floods, the warning will be an alternating high-low siren, followed by an explanation over the public address system located on the siren box.

You should immediately turn on your radio or television for news bulletins. Our warning system can interrupt all local radio and television stations, including cable. These bulletins are issued immediately upon receipt of new information.

## Before the flood

Be alert when storms approach. Be prepared to move valuables to a higher location and to evacuate immediately, if necessary.

Prepare a flood response plan that will help you think through all the details that demand attention after a flood watch or warning is issued. Writing it down will help you remember everything, which is especially important when everyone is in a hurry and excited because a flood is coming.

Make a record of all your personal property. Go through your house room by room and record household inventories. Take photographs or videotapes. Inventory forms are available free



from most insurance companies or you can make your own. Put photocopies of inventory records, insurance policies, deeds, automobile titles, wills, telephone numbers, bank and credit card account numbers, and other

valuable papers at a location away from your house, such as a safe deposit box.

If you know a flood is coming, you should shut off the gas and electricity and move valuable contents upstairs. If you're not sure how to turn off your gas and electricity, call your local utility companies.

## When the flood comes

The safety of your family is the most important consideration. Flood waters can rise rapidly. You should be prepared to evacuate before the water level reaches your property.

Do not walk through flowing water. Drowning is the number one cause of flood deaths. Currents can be deceptive; 6 inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. Use a pole or stick to ensure that the ground is still there before you go through an area of standing water.

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.

If you're caught in the house by floodwater, move to the second floor or to the roof. Take warm clothing, a flashlight, and portable radio with you. Wait for help.

# Tulsa's 100-year regulatory floodplains

*Plan your evacuation route now, before a disaster strikes. Blue areas on this map locate the 100-year floodplain in Tulsa.*

*This map provides general guidance on the location of 100-year floodplains within the City of Tulsa. It is not to be used for flood insurance or regulatory purposes. If you want to know your flood zone or need additional information, please contact the Mayor's Action Center, 596-2100.*