

TOWN OF INDIAN SHORES SPRING 2007- NEWSLETTER



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SOME FLOOD PROTECTION TECHNIQUES TO CONSIDER.

Preventing Backflow - Using Valves, Plugs, Caps, and Seepage Barriers in Flood Protection

When there is more water outside than inside a floodwall, levee, or building, water continually tries to get inside. Obvious paths of intrusion are sewer drains for the bathtub and toilet and drainage tubes in floodwalls and levees. Floor drains in some areas of buildings also could provide such a path.

Any drain with its inside opening below flood level must be blocked. The drains may not be obvious - such as air-conditioning condensation drains - so look carefully.

Seepage

The solution to seepage problems is to block underground flow with a barrier that increases the distance water must travel through the ground to get past your barrier.

Most Louisiana soils have more than 30 percent clay content, so seepage is not a significant problem for floods shorter than two days; however, if the soil was imported for construction of the building, the rate of seepage should be determined. This is done using the percolation test commonly used to determine whether a septic system will drain properly.

Tips

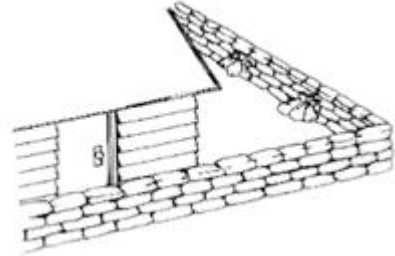
- Prevent sewage back-flow with a valve installed in the main sewer line.
- For back-flow protection without human intervention, use a flap valve. Back it up with a positively sealing ball valve, gate valve or plug. More elaborate valve systems are available.
- Caps or plugs may be used instead of valves on exposed storm drains to prevent back-flow. Flow is blocked in both directions.
- On open-ended drain tubes, keep valve gaskets, cap seats and threads clean so they will function properly. Know where removable caps are kept.
- In an emergency, prevent sewer back-flow by stuffing a plastic bag full of rags into the sewer pipe at the clean-out.

- Never use pumps and barriers to create a water-level difference of more than 3 feet without proper design by a competent professional.

Sandbag Barriers

Short Sandbag Walls

For walls four bags high or less, a simple vertical stack can work. Bolster the wall on the dry side every 5 feet with a cluster of bags or by providing other support. You may use the building to support a short vertical stack.



Vertical stacks are used to block doorways also.

Caulking weep holes on brick veneer buildings can slow the passage of water into a building, but water will pass through the brick itself unless it has been sealed or the building has been wrapped. Blocking doors and weep holes is not a reliable flood protection method.

Sandbag Levees

Where you need protection from water deeper than 2 feet, the stack of sandbags should look more like a levee.

To incorporate 6-mil plastic sheeting into the stack, first lay the sheet along the ground where the outside edge of the sandbag levee will be. It should be 6 mils or heavier, and three times as wide as the intended height of the levee. As you add bags, bring the sheeting up between them in stair-step fashion.

You can add plastic sheeting to the face of a sandbag levee instead of weaving it between the bags (see diagram). In either case, don't stretch the plastic; it should be slack wherever it isn't

completely supported by the bags.

Add height to the levee by adding bags to the inside and crown.



A bonding trench will help prevent the levee from sliding.

When blocking an opening, the plastic sheeting should overlap the permanent structure at least 2 feet on each end. Continue the sandbagging a couple of feet beyond the opening in front of a permanent wall or levee to get a good seal.