



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
INSURANCE DEPARTMENT

August 30, 2024

STORM WATER COVERAGE AND FLOOD INSURANCE

Fact Sheet

On August 18, 2024, parts of Connecticut were significantly affected by a severe rain event, which caused wide-spread storm and flood damage. In this fact sheet, the Connecticut Insurance Department (CID) provides general homeowner and commercial insurance coverage information and describes the claim process under a typical homeowners policy. In addition, links to the Division of Emergency Management (DEMHS) website with information on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is included below.

What is a flood?

In general, a flood is an excess of water (or mud) on land that is normally dry. The NFIP specifically defines flood to be a general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of two or more acres of normally dry land area, or of two or more properties (at least one of which is the policyholder's property) from:

- Overflow of inland or tidal waters;
- Unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any source;
- Mudflow; or
- Collapse or subsidence of land along the shore of a lake or similar body of water as a result of erosion or undermining, caused by waves or currents of water exceeding anticipated cyclical levels.

Homeowners Insurance & Storm Water Damage

Homeowners, condo and renter's insurance policies cover most types of property damage from severe storms including wind and fire damage. **Damage from flooding is excluded from these policies**, but separate policies can be purchased from the NFIP or a private insurer (flood insurance is discussed below).

Whether a property owner, renter or business/organization, no one is completely safe from potential flooding. Did you know that an inch of water [in a home can cause more than \\$25,000 in damage](#)? Having flood insurance can mean the difference between recovery and financial devastation. And while flood zones are specific geographic areas where there is a higher statistical probability of a flood occurring, floods do occur outside those zones. Statistics show that people who live outside high-risk areas file more than 25% of flood claims nationwide and pay less in premiums than those living within flood zones.

Download this brochure: "[Why Do I Need Flood Insurance?](#)" FEMA provides this brochure to help consumers understand why flood insurance is important and to provide references for commonly asked questions.

Note there is a 30-day waiting period before a flood policy takes effect.

Consumer Tips for Filing Storm Claims

Before the Storm

When a claim is filed, your insurer can only cover what it knows you lost or was damaged. As such, it is important to keep [accurate records](#) of your property. Expensive items such as art, collectibles or jewelry may require a separate policy and the items typically must be appraised.

You should store your property inventory and policy information (including contact information) somewhere other than your residence or digitally so that you can retrieve the information at any time. There is at least one free smart phone home [inventory APP](#) created by state regulators that you can use to create an inventory.

Immediately Following the Storm

- Take photos of the damage and remove personal property if your home cannot be secured. Do not dispose of property until an insurance adjuster has reviewed it for your claim. Many policies include reimbursement for storage costs incurred until your home is repaired.
- Make temporary repairs or arrange for a qualified professional to do so. After damage has occurred, it is generally your obligation to prevent any further damage (e.g., covering a damaged roof and windows).
- If you need to find other lodging, keep records of expenses and all receipts. Homeowners and renters insurance generally provide limited coverage for expenses including meals, rent, utility installation and transportation. Your insurance company may also help locate lodging for you.

Reporting Your Claim

- Most insurance policies have a time requirement for filing a claim. As such, claims should be reported as soon as possible. The process will go faster if you can locate a copy of your policy and home inventory.
- Call your agent or insurance company, or visit your insurer's mobile claims center (if available) to start your claim. If you need help locating your insurance company or agent, contact the Connecticut Insurance Department at 860-297-3900, email cid.insurance@ct.gov or use our [online contact options](#).
- Discuss with your agent or insurance company critical repairs that need to be made. Whether you make the repairs or hire someone, save the receipts for your claim.
- You will be asked to list all items destroyed, damaged or missing. If you do not have a [home inventory](#), begin making a list of items going room by room from memory and include as much detail as possible.
- If your car is damaged while in your garage/carport, it is likely covered by your automobile policy under the comprehensive coverage if you purchased collision and comprehensive auto coverage —not your homeowners or renters policy. If you are insured by two separate insurance companies for these coverages, you must file a claim with both companies.
- If you have a flood insurance policy, the process for reporting a claim is the same as reporting a homeowners or renters claim. For NFIP information on filing a flood claim refer to: <https://www.floodsmart.gov/how-do-i-start-my-flood-claim>

Claim Handling by Your Insurance Company

- Your insurance company will send an insurance adjuster to survey the damage at no cost to you. Public adjusters may offer the same services, but you will be responsible for any related fees. Check with the CID to confirm a public adjuster is licensed.
- Do not feel rushed or pushed to agree on a settlement. If there are disagreements, try to resolve them with your insurance company. If you cannot reach an agreement, the CID can help you decide if appraisal, arbitration or mediation are options.
- The CID requires prompt response and timely processing and handling of claims. Any issues should be brought to the CID's attention by calling 860-297-399 or by email at cid.insurance@ct.gov.
- If your claim is covered, the covered amounts may be paid in multiple payments. The first will likely be an emergency advance and may include additional living expenses. The

payment for your personal property and any additional living expenses will be made payable to you. Payments for the structure may be payable to you and your mortgage company or bank if you have a mortgage.

- If you have a deductible, your claim payment(s) will be reduced by the amount of your deductible.

Making Repairs

- Beware of scams! Unfortunately, dishonest individuals and companies often take advantage of the chaos following a disaster. Check with the state [Department of Consumer Protection](#) to make sure contractors are properly licensed and/or registered. Get references before hiring a contractor to make repairs. Always insist on a written estimate before repairs begin and do not sign any contracts before your insurance adjuster has examined the damage.
- Do not pay a contractor the full amount up front or sign over your insurance settlement payment. A contractor should expect to be paid a percentage when the contract is signed and the remainder when the work is completed.
- If the contractor finds hidden damage that was not discovered in the original assessment by the insurance adjuster, contact your insurance company to resolve the difference.

Additional Information

- Read the [Post-Disaster Claims Guide](#).
- Flood and earthquake damage are NOT covered in a typical homeowners or renters policy. If you have a separate flood or earthquake policy, contact the company that wrote the additional policy to file your claim.
- Even after settling your claim, if you think of items that were not in your initial loss list, contact your insurance company. Unless the company has paid the entire limit for the coverage of those types of items, it is possible the company will make an additional payment.
- If your damages exceed the amount of your coverage, federal agencies will occasionally provide grants or low-interest loans to assist with recovery following major disasters.

What is Flood Insurance?

Learn [All About Flood Insurance - NAIC](#)

Flood insurance is a special policy that is federally backed by the National Flood Insurance Plan (NFIP) and available for homeowners, renters and businesses because flood damage is not covered under a typical homeowners, renters or business insurance policy.

The standard NFIP flood insurance policy provides coverage for direct physical damage to insured property up to the replacement cost or actual cash value (ACV) of actual damages or the policy limit of liability, whichever is less.

- **Homeowners:** Flood insurance policies generally cover up to \$250,000 of flood damage to a home's structure. A standard NFIP flood policy will cover structural damage, including damage to the furnace, water heater, air conditioner, floor surfaces (carpeting and tile) and debris clean up.
 - Home contents such as a washer, dryer or freezer are not covered under a standard flood policy. However, coverage for up to \$100,000 of flood damage to personal property is available generally for an additional premium.
 - Coverage for basements, crawlspaces and ground-level enclosures on elevated homes is limited. Be sure to ask an insurance agent about any restrictions in coverage.
- **Renters:** Because flood damage is not covered under a basic renters insurance policy, renters should talk with an insurance agent about flooding risks to decide if flood coverage for belongings is needed.

Business owners: A basic flood insurance policy will generally cover up to \$500,000 on a non-residential building.

How Much Does Flood Insurance Cost?

According to FEMA, the average homeowners flood insurance premium is approximately \$800 to \$1,200 a year.

Premiums for flood insurance will vary depending on risk level for a flood loss, the amount of coverage chosen, the type of coverage needed and the preferred deductible.

Different deductibles for building property and personal property coverage may be available. The deductibles will generally apply separately to building property and personal property claims. Additionally, mortgage companies can require that a flood insurance deductible is no more than a certain amount.

Purchasing Flood Insurance

Flood insurance can be purchased for a home or business regardless of whether the property is in a floodplain. Contact your insurance company or agent to purchase flood insurance. Need help finding a participating insurance company or agent in your area? Visit [FEMA FloodSmart to search](#) for a participating carrier and agent in your area. Or call the NFIP at (877) 336-2627. Also visit www.floodsmart.gov to get more information about flood risk by location and for:

- [Commercial/Non-residential Coverage](#)
- [Residential Coverage](#)
- [Condominiums](#)
- [Coverage limits, residential vs. non-residential](#)

There are also a limited number of insurance companies that write flood insurance outside of the NFIP. These are called **private flood insurance** policies. You should check with your insurance agent to see if private flood insurance can satisfy your needs and your bank's requirements if you have a mortgage on the property.

Plan Ahead: Flood Insurance has a Waiting Period

It is very important to plan ahead. A flood insurance policy normally will not go into effect until 30 days after purchase.

DEEP, the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection has additional NFIP information on their [website](#).

- [What Is Covered \(and Not Covered\) Under My NFIP Policy?](#)
- [NFIP How to Start a Flood Claim](#)
- [NFIP Flood Claims Process Fact Sheet](#)

FEMA Information

DEMHS, the [Connecticut Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security](#) has Flood and FEMA information online.

- [August 18, 2024: Severe Flooding Disaster \(ct.gov\)](#)
- [FEMA Individual Assistance \(ct.gov\)](#)

Crisis Clean Up – Western CT Floods

Crisis Clean Up will connect you with volunteers from local relief organizations, community groups and faith communities who may be able to assist you with clean up. Service is not

guaranteed due to the overwhelming need. Visit crisiscleanup.org or call the Hotline at (203) 392-1752 to remain open through September 6, 2024.

Questions?

Connecticut consumers and businesses with questions about any insurance issue are encouraged to contact the Connecticut Insurance Department's Consumer Affairs Division at (860) 297-3900 or send an email to cid.insurance@ct.gov.