



Walla Walla County Community Development Department

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PRESS RELEASE

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PROPERTY OWNERS IN UNINCORPORATED WALLA WALLA COUNTY WITH FLOOD DAMAGE REMINDED OF COUNTY PERMIT REQUIREMENTS AND OUTDOOR BURNING REGULATIONS

From: Lauren A. Prentice, Director

As property owners and residents in unincorporated Walla Walla County begin clean up and repairs following recent flooding, the Walla Walla County Community Development Department is reminding residents to obtain local permits before repairing or rebuilding flood-damaged structures or property, in particular building permits and floodplain development permits.

RE-ENTERING YOUR HOME AND STARTING CLEANUP

When returning to a home that's been flooded be aware that your house may be contaminated mold or sewage, which can cause health risks for you and your family.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations on returning to flooded homes and other structures: <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/after.html>.

Prior to cleanup and emergency repairs, thoroughly document the condition of the building by photographing the inside and outside of all affected areas.

You may proceed with cleanup activities and temporary emergency repairs to prevent further deterioration, such as preventing the spread of mold/mildew, without permits from the County, such as:

- Removing and disposing of damaged contents, carpeting, wallboard, and insulation.
- Hosing and scrubbing, or cleaning floors, walls, and ductwork.
- Covering holes in roofs or walls and covering windows to prevent the weather from inflicting further damage.
- Removing sagging ceilings, shoring up broken foundations, and other actions to make the building safe to enter.

Information on disinfecting wells, water systems, and septic systems is available from the Walla Walla County Department of Community Health: https://www.co.walla-walla.wa.us/government/health_department/index.php.

FLOODPLAIN DEVELOPMENT PERMITS

Floodplain development permits are required in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) for new construction, reconstruction, and repair, as part of the County's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Compliance with the NFIP ensures that County property owners remain

eligible for flood insurance, flood disaster assistance, state and federal grants and loans, and buyout funds for flood-prone property.

Special conditions apply to substantially damaged buildings: those in which the total cost of repairs is 50 percent or more of the structure's pre-flood market value. These structures may need to be elevated or flood-proofed to reduce the potential for future flood damage.

A Substantial Development Assessment (SDA) and a Floodplain Development Permit must be obtained from the Community Development Department prior to the repair, alteration, or replacement of any of the following items:

- Exterior: Roofs, walls, siding, plaster
- Interior: Cabinets, flooring, electrical systems, plumbing, hearing, A/C
- Foundations

BUILDING PERMITS

Building permits and inspections may also be required. Contact the Community Development Department staff for more information on permitting requirements at 509-524-2610. Applications and guidance will be available online.

OUTDOOR BURNING & GARBAGE DISPOSAL

The Board of County Commissioners has applied for a blanket burn permit from the Washington State Department of Ecology for residents within the Mill Creek Road area to burn vegetation from the flood event without individual burn permits. County and State residential burn regulations apply. Do not burn garbage or construction or demolition debris. Dumpsters have been placed in the Mill Creek Road area for your use. The dumpsters are currently located at the Walla Walla Fire District 4's fire station on Mill Creek Road and near the Scenic Loop Road intersection.

Daily Burn Decision: 509-524-2612

OTHER PERMITS AND APPROVALS

Many of the areas affected by flooding are located within or adjacent to sensitive environmental areas, including designated shorelines and critical areas. These areas are regulated by the County, and State and Federal agencies also have jurisdiction.

Emergency actions necessary to prevent an immediate threat to life, to public health, safety, or welfare, or that pose an immediate risk of damage to private structures or improvements and that require remedial or preventative action in a time frame too short to allow for compliance with applicable regulations are allowed. These activities should be limited to actions required to address the emergency and generally are limited to the actions necessary to remove the immediate threat. After the emergency, these actions should be reported to the Community Development Department. Permits, reports, and mitigation may be required.

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