



# Frequently Asked Questions

## FAQ Sheet 3 – HOW TO DEAL WITH A BASEMENT FLOODING EVENT

### **1. Who should I call after a flood?**

Residents who experience a basement flooding event should report it to the Lakewood Department of Public Works, Division of Water / Waste Water Collection. A maintenance crew will be dispatched to the property at the earliest available time. Reporting the flood is very important as it provide information valuable to identifying problem areas and planning improvement projects. Please call:

**216-529-5941** Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**216-529-6820** Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**216-521-6773** After hours and on weekends, please call Lakewood Police Dispatch.

### **2. How will the City respond to my call?**

Your call will be logged in and a maintenance crew will be dispatched to your property at the earliest available time. Once they arrive, a general inspection will be done and a work order form filled out. If water remains in the basement, a pump will be left to remove the water. Later, a crew will return to investigate the cause of the flooding. The public sewer will be cleaned and televised to determine if the pipes are damaged or clogged. If the property has inspection "tee's" on the lateral sewer service pipes, these will be opened and the lateral pipes will be inspected. If damage or clogs are identified on the public side, repairs will be scheduled. If damage or clogs are identified on the private property side, the owner will be advised to retain a plumber. Unfortunately, many Lakewood properties do not have inspection tee's. If that is the case, then the City can not inspect the laterals for damage or clogs. The property owner would have to retain a plumber to perform that task. The City will not clean properties after a flood.

### **3. How are flooding reports handled by the City?**

The work order generated by the flooding report contains the address, owner's name and the subject of the report. Once the investigation has been completed, the crew completes the work order with information that describes what was found and how the problem was addressed and resolved. The property owner will receive a copy, if requested. All work orders are summarized in a monthly report to the Division Operations Manager and is used to identify larger areas in the City that need additional investigation, maintenance or sewer improvement projects.

### **4. Safety advice concerning clean-up after a flood:**

- Do not enter the basement until the water recedes or the pump has cleared standing water from the floor. If you must walk through the water, shut off the electricity to the building at the main circuit box first to avoid an electrocution hazard. **DO NOT OPERATE ANY ELECTRICAL DEVICE WHILE STANDING IN WATER!**
- Wear rubber boots and work gloves. Have open cuts treated immediately to minimize the risk of infection.
- If you smell gas, leave the building and immediately call the Fire Department and your gas supplier. Do not touch any electrical appliances or fixtures and do not touch switches. Open all doors and windows and do not ignite open flames.
- If the furnace, water heater or any other appliances became wet, have them inspected and cleaned by a qualified service technician before attempting to use. Replace the furnace filter.
- A good anti-bacterial cleaning solution is eight (8) tablespoons of liquid bleach in one (1) gallon of water. **NEVER MIX BLEACH WITH AMMONIA – THE FUMES PRODUCED ARE TOXIC!**

### **5. General information and advice.**

The majority of Lakewood homes and buildings are more than 80 years old. The people who built them never intended the basements to be used as part of the active living space, although most present owners do just that. A flood can ruin perishable valuables, destroy sensitive electronic devices, finished walls and floors. Furnaces, water heaters and other appliances not designed for water contact can also be damaged or destroyed. PLEASE NOTE: We have been told that insurance companies will only replace these items a limited number of times if the building has a history of multiple flooding events. Please consider this when planning new uses for a basement area.