



Dear Property Owner,

The Bighorn Fire has increased the risk of flash floods and mudflows in your area. You are receiving this notice because the Pima County Regional Flood Control District is concerned that your property may be at increased risk of flooding.

Pima County residents living adjacent to washes downstream of the Bighorn Fire burn area should be aware of the increased risk of flooding due to the fire and take appropriate steps to mitigate that risk. Loss of vegetation and physical changes to the soil leave burned areas prone to increased runoff and erosion. This combination can cause flash floods and mudflows to flow faster and with more volume than normal flows during a typical monsoon storm. These flows, which can include ash, mud, and vegetative debris, increase flood risk for those who work and live in downstream areas.

The Bighorn Fire has created hazardous flooding conditions for many of the washes that flow from the Coronado National Forest into the Town of Oro Valley and the Catalina Foothills areas. Flash floods may overtop wash channel banks and cause damage in adjacent areas, even beyond the limits of the regulatory flood. See the attached infographic for more information on this flood risk.

After the Aspen Fire on Mt Lemmon in 2003, flash floods and mudflows resulted in at least one reported fatality and caused extensive property damage in watershed areas downstream of the burn area.

What can you do?

Sign up for MyAlerts. The Pima County Office of Emergency Management's MyAlerts (www.myalerts.pima.gov) system allows the Regional Flood Control District to provide near real-time flood alerts to Pima County residents within certain watersheds. Residents who sign up for MyAlerts using addresses within these watercourses will receive messages about flood events in their area. This warning system is the most effective way for the Flood Control District to notify residents about flood events. Due to the increased flood risk associated with the Bighorn Fire, the Flood Control District recommends that you sign up for MyAlerts. Find additional information about the MyAlerts Flood Alert Messaging webpage at www.pima.gov/floodalerts.

Floods are dynamic and this warning system will not be perfect, but is our attempt to provide you an opportunity to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your structure. It is possible that properties that get a warning will not flood, and properties that were not warned are impacted.

Get Flood insurance: Normally, there is a 30-day waiting period from the time that flood insurance is purchased to when it becomes effective. When the risk of flooding increases due to wildfires that occur on federal land, the National Flood Insurance Program provides an exception should your structure get flooded within the 30-day waiting period. Your insurance adjuster will apply for the exception as necessary. See the attached information sheet. The Flood Control District recommends that you acquire flood insurance. The cost does not change due to the fire and you may be surprised how inexpensive it is, especially if your structure is not within a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area.

Suzanne Shields, P.E., Director

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Protect your structure(s): A common response to the threat of flooding is to protect ones entire property. However, frequently some of that land is necessary to convey flows and obstructing the flow path risks adversely affecting other properties. The best course of action is to identify ways to protect your residence from flood damage. The use of sandbags in the doorways, or small diversions just upstream of the residence is usually the most effective way to protect the residence while leave the rest of the property open to flow. Protecting more than just your structures may cause harm to your neighbors and leave you open to civil lawsuits. It may also be a violation of the Floodplain Ordinance, leaving you open to enforcement action and fines.

Pima County and the Town of Oro Valley are providing a limited number of sandbags for impacted properties at the following locations:

- Department of Transportation facility at 1313 S. Mission Road (724-6410);
- Brandi Fenton Memorial Park in the northwest dirt parking lot;
- South side of Ina Road just east of Pima Canyon Drive;
- In Catalina at the northwest corner of Golder Ranch Drive and Twin Lakes Drive;
- In Summerhaven on Carter Canyon Road at the north side of Snyder Road and Lason Lane;
- and
- The Town of Oro Valley is providing sandbags at Naranja Park in the Christmas tree drop off lot located just north of the Archery Range along the entry drive.

Visit the following web sites for additional Information:

Create an Emergency Response Plan –

https://webcms.pima.gov/UserFiles/Servers/Server_6/File/Government/Flood%20Control/Public%20Outreach/emergency-response-plan-guide.pdf (Also available at the links below)

Floods Follow Fires – www.pima.gov/FloodsFollowFires/

Be Flood Safe – www.pima.gov/BeFloodSafe/