

## FLOOD PREPAREDNESS

- 1. FLOOD INSURANCE- PURCHASE FLOOD INSURANCE.** Homeowner's insurance policies do not cover losses from flooding. Flood insurance policies must be purchased as a separate policy. Renters can also buy flood policies to protect their personal property. The maximum policy amount available for a single-family residence is \$250,000. You are eligible for flood insurance because the City of Harahan participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. If the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) flood maps show that a property is in an AE zone, flood insurance is required by law in order to get a loan or mortgage. There is a 30-day waiting period before a flood insurance policy becomes effective. In Harahan, the purchase of flood insurance on a voluntary basis is wise even outside of Special Flood Hazard Areas. Call your insurance agent for flood insurance information. Once you've purchased flood insurance, keep your policy and an itemized list of your furnishings, clothing, and valuables in a safe place, such as a safe deposit box. Call your agent or broker immediately if you suffer flood damage.
- 2. PROPERTY PROTECTION-** There are many things you can do to an existing building to minimize or eliminate the potential of flood damage. Sand, plywood, plastic sheeting and lumber can be used to protect a structure temporarily. These supplies are readily available from a number of retail outlets throughout the parish. Personal items can also be elevated or moved to upper floors. Permanent flood proofing measures for flood prone structures are preferable to temporary ones. These permanent retrofitting methods include elevating the structure, building floodwalls and closures, and protecting utilities. Contact the U. S. Corps of Engineers, Floodplain Services or Jefferson Parish's Department of Engineering for assistance with flood proofing. The Regulatory Department can also make site visits to discuss local flood problems or flood proofing techniques by calling 737-6383. You can also get information on retrofitting, flood insurance, flood protection, and floodplain management from the Harahan Branch of the Library. Before proceeding with retrofitting measures or any construction and development, (i.e. filling, dredging, remodeling) check with the Harahan Regulatory Office at 737-6383 for applicable building codes, permit requirements, zoning restrictions or to report illegal development.
- 3. DRAINAGE SYSTEM MAINTENANCE-** The Harahan Public Works Department has a regular program of drainage system maintenance. Call the

Streets Department at 737-6383 for drainage information service. You can help by cleaning catch basins in front of your property. Also, avoid dumping debris in catch basins, drainage ditches, and canals. Debris can cause the drainage system to function improperly and cause flooding. Harahan Ordinance prohibits any illegal dumping of trash, debris, cement, sand, oils, liquids, including grocery carts etc. into drainage system. To report any illegal dumping, call the Harahan Police Department @ 737-9763.

- 4. LOCAL FLOOD HAZARD-**Flooding can occur during any season of the year. Your property is in or near a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the use of Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The principal source of floodwater in the city is rain. In the late summer, hurricanes and their tidal surges also pose a serious threat. Floodwater collects because much of the city lies at or below sea level with land prone to subsidence or sinking. The low, flat ground provides little gravity drainage so water that falls in the city must be pumped out.

Maps showing flood hazard areas for The City of Harahan and Jefferson Parish are available for review in City Hall. To see what zone your property is located in, visit City Hall and review the appropriate Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) or call the City of Harahan at 737-6383, or on-line refer to [www.jeffparish.net](http://www.jeffparish.net) and click on Web Map Site, then Address Information, and then follow listed instructions to obtain appropriate flood zone for your property.

- 5. FLOOD WARNING-** The Jefferson Parish flood warning system can provide an early notification of flooding conditions. A *Flood Watch* means that flooding is possible. A *Flash Flood Watch* means that a flash flood, which can happen very fast with little warning, is possible. A *Flood Warning* means a flood is occurring or will occur soon; the flood may take several hours to develop. A *Flash Flood Warning* means a flash flood is occurring or will happen very soon; you should find safety immediately.

Listen to local stations for news, information and instructions. Keep a supply of fresh batteries on hand to operate a portable radio in case electrical power is lost. Tune your radio to 870 AM or 101.9 FM for emergency broadcasts.

An informational pamphlet entitled Surviving the Storm (Jefferson Parish) is available at all library

branches in Jefferson Parish and the video is available for rent at no charge at Video Plus.

The City of Harahan shall coordinate all emergency procedures via Jefferson Parish State of Emergency and the Office of Emergency Preparedness.

- 6. DEVELOPMENT IN THE FLOODPLAIN -** Always check with the City of Harahan Regulatory Department for permitting requirements before you start any project. Development in the floodplain has specific requirements. Elevation certificates are required for new structures in the floodplain or for projects of substantial improvement or damage repair. *Substantial improvement* is when the cost of the improvements or repairs meet or exceed 50% of the value of the existing structure. Elevation certificates are kept on file at the City of Harahan Regulatory Office, 6437 Jefferson Highway, and copies can be obtained there. Please call 737-6383 before beginning construction to get complete permitting requirements and information.
- 7. NATURAL AND BENEFICIAL FUNCTIONS OF FLOODPLAIN -** Floodplains play an important role in Harahan and it is important that they be protected. Within the levee system, they help store and move floodwaters through the canals to the pumping stations. Outside the levee system floodplains help recharge groundwater, provide fish and wildlife habitat, provide recreational opportunities and provide scenic value.

## HARAHAN WEATHER WATCH HURRICANE SEASON/FLOOD PREPAREDNESS 2004

.....**ARE YOU PREPARED?**

Your property is in or near the flood hazard area as mapped by FEMA. See the Map of Local Flood Hazard included in this brochure for the 100-year floodplain.

If you receive property damage during a flood, immediately report your damages to The City of Harahan at 737-6383. This data will allow the city to get an accurate count on property damage in the area and therefore aid in applying for Federal Assistance.

For additional information on flood insurance and other flood related data, you can visit the Jefferson Parish Harahan Branch Library or log on to [www.jefferson.lib.us](http://www.jefferson.lib.us) and click on the Reference link and select *Flood Information*.

Hurricane season officially begins June 1<sup>st</sup> and ends November 30<sup>th</sup>.

**YOU ARE AT RISK FOR ALL HURRICANES ESPECIALLY IF:**

You live in a mobile home  
You live in a low-lying inland area

All Harahan Residents are at risk if a hurricane is category 3 (slow) or 4 and 5 (slow/fast)

## FLOOD SAFETY/EVACUATION

If emergency officials tell you to evacuate or leave your home, go immediately to a safe shelter, which will be announced, by the parish at the time of the event. We do, however, encourage all citizens to leave the parish altogether during these instances. Turn off all utilities at the main switch, but only if time permits. Do not touch any electrical equipment unless it is in a dry area. Every source of electricity can be dangerous during and after flooding.

If you're caught in a building by suddenly rising water, move to the second floor or the roof (you may need a tool on hand to break through the roof). Take drinking water, a flashlight and a portable radio. Wait for help. If your car stalls in a flooded area, abandon it as soon as possible.

Swimming or playing in or near floodwater is life threatening. Drainage ditches and canals carry fast moving floodwater and are extremely dangerous. **Explain this to your children!** Do not attempt to walk through floodwater that is more than knee deep.

**Be Safe...Be Prepared**