

## FLOODPLAIN PERMITS

All residents should be aware that any development or construction in a floodplain is subject to regulation and requires a building permit issued by the city's building inspector. **If you intend to build, make improvements to your property, or fill any land, it is necessary to contact the city's building inspector prior to beginning any project.** Residents are also encouraged to report any illegal development to the city.

## CONSTRUCTION DESIGN

- Strengthening and minimizing water damage to basements
- Building homes with water resistant materials
- **Elevating buildings**
- Diverting water
- Erosion control measures



## HISTORY OF FLOODING IN ATHENS

**THE MOST SERIOUS SOURCE HAS BEEN, AND CONTINUES TO BE, OOSTANAULA CREEK, AT WHICH SOME 47 IMPORTANT FLOODS HAVE BEEN RECORDED WITHIN THE LAST 100 YEARS. ALL MAJOR RECORDED FLOODS: 1896, 1922, 1946, 1947, 1963, 1973, AND 2003 HAVE OCCURRED BETWEEN JANUARY AND APRIL.**

The most damaging flood in the lower Hiwassee River Basin was on Oostanaula Creek which began to overflow its banks early in the morning of March 16 and crested late on the evening of the same day. The creek rose to heights of eight to ten feet over its banks through the City of Athens and was the highest ever recorded in the downtown district.

The record breaking flood entered 31 homes, 37 businesses, 2 industries, 1 church, and a natural gas substation causing extensive property damage.

### *Floods of March 1973 in the Tennessee River Basin*



The account of the 1973 flood along Oostanaula Creek is only one example of many floods causing property damage within our community. Although the City of Athens has taken measures to reduce flood potential, the simple fact is any flood of the past can be expected to reoccur.

Damage from these floods need not to happen and assistance in seeking methods to reduce such losses is available.

This information is designed to cover the basics of flood protection. Much more detailed information is available from the Flood Protection Library located at the E. G. Fisher Public Library.



## FLOOD PREVENTION ATHENS, TENNESSEE

## THE FLOOD HAZARD IN ATHENS

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Flood Insurance Study completed in 1986 lists seven sources of flooding within the city.

Oostanaula Creek  
North Mouse Creek  
& its tributaries  
Smokey Branch  
Walker Branch  
Black Branch  
Forrest Branch  
Blue Springs Branch



## FLOOD INSURANCE

You should be aware that flood insurance *is not* part of your normal homeowner's policy. However, flood insurance is available through local insurance agents and the National Flood Insurance Program. Almost any walled and roofed building that is principally above ground may be insured. Coverages are available on residential, nonresidential, and small business properties covering both buildings and their contents.

## FLOOD SAFETY MEASURES

In the event Athens suffers from flood waters, the following actions may maximize your safety and help minimize the flood impact.

- Keep battery powered radio tuned to a local station.
- Stay put and wait for rescue teams.
- **Never attempt to walk across stretches of flood water that are more than knee deep.**
- If time permits, turn off all utilities. Never touch electrical equipment unless it's in a dry area.
- Do not drive where water is over the roads.
- Prior to re-entering your home, check for structural damage.
- On re-entry, never use an open flame and check the electrical system before restoring any power.



## FLOOD PROTECTION MEASURES

There are two types of flood protection. Those measures you can take at the time of a flood and construction techniques designed to reduce flood damage. Consider the following actions:

- Mitigation for homeowners
- Build with flood damage resistant materials
- Install sewer back flow valves
- Anchor fuel tanks
- Raise electrical and mechanical component systems

## DRAINAGE SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

Construction and maintenance is an essential element in the ability of our city to reduce damage during flooding conditions. Athens Public Works Department regularly checks and clears drainage ways to insure proper disposal of these waters. **In addition, it is a violation of the city ordinance to alter the drainage system without an appropriate permit in any way. This includes blocking in any way or the dumping of any debris into those channels.** Potential hazards needing to be checked should be reported to the Athens Public Works Department. Report violations of the ordinance to the city's codes enforcement officer.

## PROTECTION AGAINST FLOOD CONDITIONS

- Moving as many household items to as high a place as possible
- Anchor and secure any items that may become debris in moving water
- Protect valuable equipment that cannot be relocated by using various waterproofing measures

