

# Flood preparedness

## How to protect your home or business in case of flooding



If you live in a flood-prone area, you can take steps to protect your gas and electrical appliances. However, don't put your safety at risk. Water and electricity are a potentially dangerous combination. If you see that water is already entering the building, don't touch anything and just focus on getting out safely.

### Protect your appliances

#### With advance notice

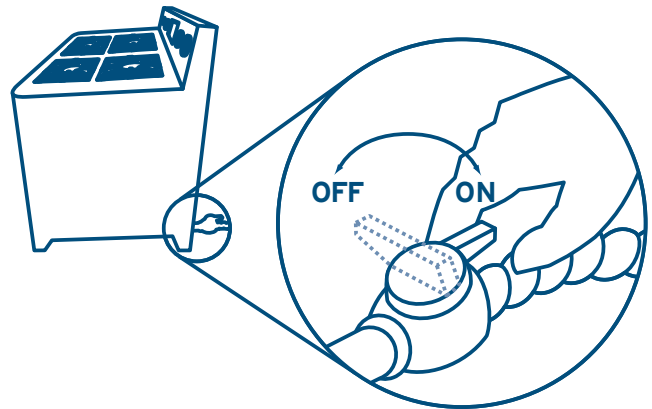
Contact a licensed gas contractor to help prepare and move gas appliances, if necessary. You can find one using our online Trade Ally Network directory.

- Locate the shut-off for the electrical panel and know how to safely shut it off if your area will be flooded.
- Unplug electrical devices from their sockets and, if possible, move appliances out of the potential flood path.
- Have a licensed gas contractor remove the electric motor, burner and controls from the furnace, and turn off the gas and electric supply.
- Have a licensed gas contractor remove hot water tanks, clothes dryers and ranges from your building. Ensure the gas supply to the appliance is safely shut off before moving it.
- Have a licensed gas contractor cap and seal the gas pipe leading to the appliance shutoff valve. This will help prevent the back flow of flood water into the gas piping system.

#### If you have to evacuate

If you don't have a lot of time to get out or a contractor is not available, here are some things you can do to protect your appliances.

- Shut off the gas supply valve to each appliance (usually found on the gas line to the appliance) by turning it crosswise to the pipe.



- Don't drain your hot water tank—just shut off the water leading to and from the tank.
- Avoid electrical lines when evacuating and do not go into basements or low-lying structures where water and electricity may be present.

## What to do when you return

### Make sure it's safe

When local authorities have advised that it's safe to do so, you may return to your home. But be aware of hazards that can still occur once flooding has subsided:

- Floodwater may have shifted your home or caused stresses to the gas piping and electrical wiring. For your safety, have a licensed gas contractor inspect your piping and appliances for damage—don't try to repair or relight them yourself.
- Wet electrical wiring is very dangerous. Any loose wires should be treated as live, and avoided. Have any wiring that has been partially or fully covered by flood water checked by a qualified electrician or electrical contractor.
- If you still see water in your building, do not attempt to shut off the main power switch. Avoid any electrical lines or basements and other low-lying structures where electricity may be present.

### Smell gas?

If you smell rotten eggs or sulphur or hear the sound of escaping gas, don't enter the building. Go outside and then call our 24-hour natural gas emergency line at **1-800-663-9911** or **911**.

## When to call us

If water levels were high enough to cover either your gas meter or electricity meter, call FortisBC to inspect your meters before using any of your equipment.

If it was necessary to turn off your natural gas due to flooding, you may find a red "outage" tag on the gas meter or your doorknob. A FortisBC technician will need to inspect the meter and regulator before turning the gas back on and relighting any appliances. Call the number on the tag or **1-877-711-8877**.

### GAS OUTAGE

INSPECTION REQUIRED  
DO NOT REMOVE

FortisBC must inspect your gas meter before gas can be turned on.

Please call 1-877-711-8877 or visit [fortisbc.com](https://fortisbc.com) for more information and estimated time for restoration.

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## Restoring your appliances and equipment

### Call a licensed gas contractor

Don't try to put natural gas appliances back in service yourself. For your safety, gas appliances that have been flooded should not be used until inspected by a licensed gas contractor.

A licensed gas contractor will check, clean, repair and pressure-test all gas pipes that have been clogged with mud or debris. They will also check switches, controls, thermostats, furnace heat exchangers, burner and pilot parts and rusting metal parts for damage. It may be less expensive to buy a new appliance than restore damaged ones to safe operating condition.

Find a licensed gas contractor near you using our online Trade Ally Network directory at **[fortisbc.com/gascontractor](https://fortisbc.com/gascontractor)**.

### Call an electrician

Floodwater may have stressed electrical wiring, and water makes a dangerous combination with any loose wires. Have any wiring that has been partially or fully covered by flood water checked by a qualified electrician or electrical contractor.

Find a qualified electrical contractor using our online directory at **[fortisbc.com/findacontractor](https://fortisbc.com/findacontractor)** (for our electricity service area in the Southern Interior of BC) or Technical Safety BC at **[technicalafetybc.ca/find-contractor](https://technicalafetybc.ca/find-contractor)** (provincewide).

## More information on safety and emergency preparedness

Visit **[fortisbc.com/safety](https://fortisbc.com/safety)** or the following provincial agencies:

- Prepared BC: **[gov.bc.ca/preparedbc](https://gov.bc.ca/preparedbc)**
- Technical Safety BC: **[technicalafetybc.ca](https://technicalafetybc.ca)**

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