Town of Wachapreague Flood Preparedness Resident Toolkit

Located along Virginia's Eastern Shore, Wachapreague is especially vulnerable to flooding from rainfall, tidal flooding, storm surge, and sea level rise. This toolkit empowers residents to understand their risk, protect what matters most, and act quickly when it counts.

Town of Wachapreague by the Numbers: [1]

$6.5 million in estimated flood damages from a major flood event

92% of homes predate modern floodplain construction standards

7 homes have been elevated through FEMA mitigation grants

How to Prepare for Flood Events

Step 1: Understand Your Risk

Check out your flood risk on the following websites:

Virginia Flood Risk Information System

FEMA Flood Map Service Center

Step 2: Get Flood Insurance

Most homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage. **The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)** can help you find an insurance provider.[3]

Step 3: Protect Your Home

- **Document your Home:** Take photos or videos of valuables and major household items before a flood.
- **Protect Important Documents:** Store birth certificates, passports, medical records, and insurance papers in a waterproof container.
- **Protect your Home:** Use the flood mitigation strategies shown on the back of this toolkit.

Make a Plan:

- ☐ Identify evacuation routes
- ☐ Know where higher ground is located
- ☐ Plan for pets and medical needs
- ☐ Choose a family meeting location

What to do During and After Flood Events

FLOOD ALERTS: KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

WATCH (Large Area)
Flooding is possible

ADVISORY (Specific Area)
Flooding is possible

WARNING (Specific Area)
Flooding is imminent

Turn Around, Don't Drown: never drive through flooded roads

1/2 foot of moving water can knock you down

1 foot of moving water can sweep away a vehicle

Take action to stay safe [2]

- **Stay Out of Floodwater**: don't walk, swim, or drive through moving water.
- **Get to Higher Ground Fast**: Move immediately to higher ground and seek safe shelter.
- **Follow Official Guidance**: Listen to alerts, obey barricades, and evacuate when told.
- **Avoid Dangerous Areas**: Stay off bridges and away from fast moving water.

Fix and rebuild after the flood [2]

- Return home **only** when authorities say it is safe.
- Watch for hazards such as **downed power lines and structural damage**. For those with medical conditions, do not enter buildings with indoor water leaks or potential mold growth.
- Document property damage with **photos.**
- **Contact** insurance and local assistance programs.
- **Wear gloves, boots, and protective gear** during cleanup.
- Floodwater may contain **dangerous debris, contamination, animals, or be electrified.**

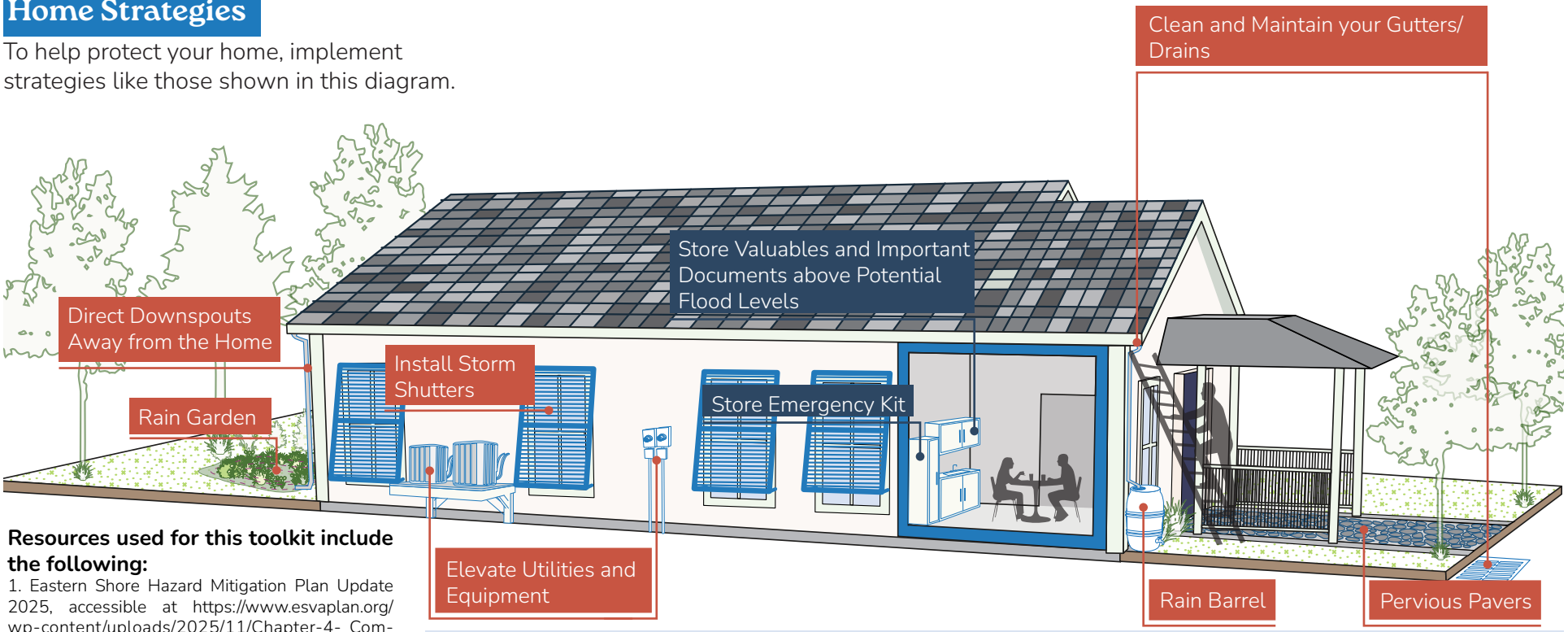
Build a Disaster Supply Kit

Prepare for intense weather events, build a disaster supply kit and store it in a safe, dry, and easily accessible location. It is best practice to assemble a kit that can sustain you and your household for at least three days. Include the following essentials: [4]

- ☐ First aid kit and fire extinguisher
- ☐ Battery-powered radio
- ☐ Nonperishable food (at least 3-days worth)
- ☐ Flashlights and extra batteries
- ☐ Sleeping bags or extra blankets
- ☐ Water (one person needs a gallon of water per day).
- ☐ Manual can opener
- ☐ Medicines and prescription drugs
- ☐ Sanitation supplies: toilet paper, soap, personal hygiene items
- ☐ Cash
- ☐ Toys, books, or games
- ☐ Extra clothing
- ☐ Pet supplies

Home Strategies

To help protect your home, implement strategies like those shown in this diagram.

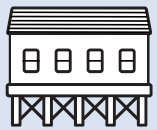


Resources used for this toolkit include the following:

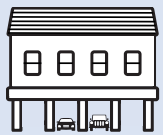
1. Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2025, accessible at https://www.esvaplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Chapter-4-_Community-Profiles_Draft.pdf
2. Ready.gov, accessible at https://www.ready.gov/floods
3. Floodsmart.gov, accessible at https://www.floodsmart.gov/
4. Virginia DCR, accessible at https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/insights/tips-for-a-more-flood-resilient-home

Home Elevation Strategies:

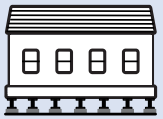
Elevating a home raises the lowest occupied floor above expected flood levels, helping reduce damage to the structure and its contents.



The home is raised and supported on deeply embedded piles or pier foundations, allowing water and waves to pass beneath the home.



Elevate living floors above BFE; ground floors can be for parking, storage, or utilities.



For existing homes, raising the structure with hydraulic jacks or building a new elevated foundation beneath the home.

Stay Informed

Keep a weather radio or refer to the following websites and apps:

Follow Wachapreague Watch updates on their Facebook:

Sign up for CODE RED Alerts:

Sign up for the NOAA Weather Radio:

Report your loss immediately to your insurance agent or carrier through FEMA: