



## **Tropical Storm Isaac Tips – Flood Damage Mitigation**

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The Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH)<sup>®</sup> offers the following tips to help preserve property and mitigate anticipated water or flood damage from Tropical Storm Isaac. These tips are provided for use in areas where conditions still safely allow for outside preparations and/or the focus is on preserving home contents and possessions.

### **Outside Your Home**

- Analyze water flow through your yard and consider how water moves during a typical thunderstorm. Inspect critical areas (storm drains, culverts, berms, gutters and downspouts) to identify potential blockage to proper flow of water away from your home.
- Clear yard of any debris, plant material or items (garden décor, foliage, or garbage cans) that can block water flow and storm drains.
- If time permits, secure and/or elevate outdoor appliances, AC units or storage tanks.
- Use sandbags to divert water away from the home:
  - **Filling**
    - Fill sandbags one-half full.
    - Use sand if readily available, otherwise, use local soil.
    - Fold top of sandbag down and rest bag on its folded top.
  - **Placing**
    - Take care in stacking sandbags.
    - Limit placement to three layers, unless stacked up against a building or sandbags are placed in a pyramid.
    - Tamp each sandbag into place, completing each layer prior to starting the next layer.
    - Clear a path between buildings for debris flow.
    - Lay a plastic sheet in between the building and the bags to control the flow and prevent water from seeping into sliding glass doors.
  - **Limitations**
    - Sandbags will not seal out water.
    - Sandbags deteriorate when exposed to continued wetting and drying for several months. If bags are placed too early, they may not be effective when needed.
    - Sandbags are for small water flow protection – up to two feet. Protection from larger flow requires a more permanent flood prevention system.
    - Wet sandbags are very heavy and caution should be used to avoid injury.

Consult your local environmental protection department before disposing of used sandbags. Sandbags exposed to contaminated floodwaters may pose an environmental hazard and require special handling.

## **Inside Your Home**

- Place important papers (birth/marriage certificates, passports, bank and insurance information) in a watertight container and keep them close. Take the container with you if evacuating or place in a high and dry location if sheltering in place.
- Protect irreplaceable keepsakes including family photos, wedding albums, and baby pictures by placing in sealed plastic bags or watertight containers.
- Take digital pictures or video to create an inventory of your personal possessions and keep the camera card handy in case of evacuation. Don't forget to open closets and drawers to document all of your belongings as they will become part of any potential insurance claim.
- Identify and move electronics and other expensive items (computers, televisions, phone systems, area rugs, expensive furniture) on lower levels of the home and elevate if possible to keep them dry.