

## Sandbag Fact Sheet

Sand bags are not an effective way to block or minimize water intrusion into homes or buildings. But, some homeowners feel a sense of well being by utilizing sand bags.

### Sandbag Limitations:

- **Sandbags will not seal out water and offer very little resistance to flooding.**
- Sandbags are heavy and stacking them takes considerable physical effort.
- Fill sandbags one-half full.
- 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.

Sandbags might help redirect storm water and debris flows away from homes and other structures, provided the sandbags are properly filled and maintained. Sandbags usually last for only one year.

### Filling:

- Self-service and citizens must bring their own shovel.
- Maximum limit of 25 bags per household.
- 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 a building is used as a backing 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.

### Removing:

- Homeowners should empty the material in the bags in their gardens or yards, then throw the bags in the trash.

- Before disposing of used sandbags, check for contamination. Sandbags exposed to contaminated floodwaters may pose an environmental hazard and require special handling.