



## 01 DAM/LEVEE FAILURES

A POTENTIAL HAZARD TO SOME AREAS

Some low-lying areas of Tulsa are subject to flooding from failures in dams or levees. If you live or work in these inundation areas, or routinely drive through them, you should be aware of potential hazards and plan the best evacuation routes to keep your family safe. If you encounter a flooded road, turn around; don't drown.

Remain vigilant during inclement weather. Tune in to the local news media for information about potential flooding or dangers from dam or levee failures. Know your risk of flooding. For a map of these inundation areas and other regulatory floodplains, visit: <http://maps.cityoftulsa.org/floodplains/>

Whether or not you live or own property in a floodplain, flood insurance is available to all Tulsans and is required if you have a federally-backed mortgage on a property in the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) floodplain. Tulsa is ranked Class 2 in FEMA's Community Rating System and flood insurance discounts up to 40 percent are available. Flood insurance can be purchased through the same insurance agent that handles your basic homeowner's insurance. Homeowner's insurance itself does not cover losses resulting from flooding; you need flood insurance.

If you have questions about floodplains, contact City of Tulsa Floodplain Administrator Michael Ling at (918) 596-7285.

# CITY LIFE

APRIL 2021

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## IN THIS EDITION OF CITY LIFE

**01**

**DAM-LEVEE FAILURES**

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Know where flooding could occur. Flood insurance can protect your property.

**02**

**CITY HAS CLEAN WATER**

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Celebrate Drinking Water Week, May 2-8. Learn how H2O improves lives.

**03**

**CHECK SEWER SERVICE**

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Locate and inspect the condition of your sewer clean-out, back-water valve.

**04**

**PREPARE FOR WEATHER**

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Build and register a safe room; take precautions for tornadoes, flooding.

**+ PLUS: CALL OKIE BEFORE YOU DIG**

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WWW.CITYOFTULSA.ORG | TULSA311@CITYOFTULSA.ORG | CALL 311

Tulsa  
A New Kind of Energy.

## 02 SAFE DRINKING WATER

TULSA'S MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE

The City of Tulsa works diligently to deliver safe drinking water to you and your family and joins the American Water Works Association in celebrating Drinking Water Week, May 2-8, 2021.

**Public Health Protection:** Our first obligation is to provide water that is safe for consumption and protects the public health. In parts of the world without modern water systems, an estimated 3 million people die every year from preventable waterborne diseases like cholera and dysentery. In contrast, stringent U.S. water regulations require water systems to regularly monitor for more than 100 contaminants and meet public health-based standards.

**Quality of Life:** If the City of Tulsa didn't have a reliable source of water, how would we wash clothes or dishes, bathe, flush toilets, or water our yards? How would businesses operate? Some measures of a successful society depend on the accessibility of safe water, resulting in low mortality rates, economic diversity, productivity and public safety.

**Extreme Cold and Winter Storm Impacts on Water and Wastewater Utilities:** Cold weather brings with it the potential for freezing temperatures, heavy snowfall and ice incidents that can have multiple impacts on a community. Impacts to drinking water and wastewater utilities may include, but are not limited to:

- **Pipe breaks throughout the distribution system, due to freeze/thaw cycles**
- **Loss of power and communication lines**
- **Limited access to facilities due to icy roads or debris such as downed tree limbs**
- **Reduced work force due to unsafe travel conditions throughout the service area**
- **Source water quality impacts due to increased amount of road salt in stormwater runoff**
- **Potential surface water supply challenges as ice and frozen slush can block valves and restrict intakes**

These incidents are precisely why Tulsa Metropolitan Utility Authority and the City of Tulsa are taking a proactive approach to replace degrading system infrastructure.



### 03 SEWER MAINTENANCE

#### CHECK CLEAN-OUT, BACK-WATER VALVE

A sewer clean-out is a vertical pipe that provides access to a property’s sewer service, allowing homeowners or plumbers to clear blockages that disrupt service. A clean-out cap is typically white PVC or metal, about 4 inches in diameter, and located near buildings.

Both homeowners and tenants should locate and inspect their clean-out cap before a plumbing emergency occurs. Keeping the caps screwed onto the clean-out helps prevent possible sewer backups caused by yard debris, dirt, and other items entering the sewer system. Capping also stops excessive inflow and infiltration, which can overload our system and cause sewer overflows.

A back-water valve is the resident’s protection against sewer back-up into the structure. If water tries to back up from the sewer mainline, the valve prevents sewage from backing up into the building. Back-water valves are typically located either outside near the building or in a floor drain in a basement. Those outside have a cap similar to a clean-out cap and a vertical pipe down to the valve.

You can protect yourself from sewer problems by making sure you have an accessible clean-out, keeping your sewer line in good condition, and by making sure you have a functional back-water valve.

### SAFE DIGGING MONTH

#### PIPELINE SAFETY IN OUR COMMUNITY

April is National Safe Digging Month. Before you begin any outdoor projects this spring, consider the following information that can keep you and your neighborhood safe.

As you know, the City of Tulsa provides water, sewer and stormwater service through a network of underground pipes. Your private water and sewer lines connect to the City’s system. When you combine these piping systems with the electric, natural gas and telecommunications networks, it’s easy to see why utility lines can be damaged if not properly located before digging.

**Call Before You Dig** – please be cautious before you begin any construction project on your property. While digging, if you accidentally hit the utility networks buried underground, you could interrupt services that thousands of people depend on, and put yourself in danger as well. Whether you’re planting a tree, or installing a deck or sprinkler system, state law requires calling 811 at least 48 hours before you plan to dig, to allow all utility line locations to be marked. There’s no charge to you for this service.

The City of Tulsa and other member utilities participate in “Call Okie,” the Oklahoma One-Call System, which locates and marks their underground infrastructure, including pipelines, cables and wires within 48 hours of a request.

The City of Tulsa encourages you to be safe and avoid costly repairs: plan ahead and call 811 to locate underground utilities prior to digging. For more information, please visit: [www.okie811.org](http://www.okie811.org)



### 04 SAFE ROOM BENEFITS

#### BE PREPARED FOR TORNADOES, FLOODS

To ensure safe construction and proper installation, safe rooms built or installed within the city of Tulsa are required to have a building permit before construction. This is particularly true when building or installing safe rooms in flood-prone areas.

Flood hazards are an important consideration when placing an above- or below-ground safe room in a new or existing home. Below-ground safe rooms must be designed to avoid accumulating water during the heavy rains that often accompany severe windstorms.

Homeowners should contact the City of Tulsa Permit Center at (918) 596-9456 to obtain a safe room building permit. City staff can help you determine what additional requirements or restrictions there may be for your safe room if your property is located in a floodplain.

If you already have a safe room at your home or office, you should consider participating in the City of Tulsa’s Storm Shelter Registry. This registry provides information to emergency responders to help them locate citizens after a natural disaster such as a tornado. Having a registered safe room will provide emergency personnel with time-saving information should your safe room be blocked by debris.

You can register your safe room online with your City utility account number. To participate in the registry, go to [www.cityoftulsa.org](http://www.cityoftulsa.org) and search for “safe room.” After registering, you can call the City of Tulsa Customer Care Center at 311 to request that Tulsa Fire Department personnel visit your home or business and obtain the exact GPS coordinates of your safe room.

Tornadoes are dangerous, but the severe storms and flash flooding that often accompany them can be just as dangerous. During a tornado warning, it is always best to use a safe room or shelter in place in a sturdy building with as many walls between you and the tornado as possible and at the lowest level of the house. If you are in a mobile home, find a sturdy building or preferably a safe room you can go to when the storm threatens and allow plenty of time to get to it. You should always avoid basements with a history of flooding.