

# ARE YOU PREPARED?



## BUILDING NEAR FLOODPLAINS

Your town oversees regulations on local wetlands, a natural floodplain feature. Wetlands are important in reducing flooding, and act as a natural filter for pollutants. They include areas such as marshes, sand dunes, and land subject to coastal storm surge flooding.

Building in wetland areas or in wetland buffer zones (within 100 feet of a wetland or water body) must be approved through the town's Conservation Commission via a permitting process to be sure the work you perform does not harm the wetland. Based on their determination, they may issue a permit for the work as long as certain conditions are met to protect the wetland.

If you are considering doing any construction or landscaping near a wetland or water-body, contact your local Conservation Commission.

For more information, please visit:

[www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water](http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water)



**\$1.1 BILLION**  
prevented annually  
from local floodplain  
ordinances

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



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**Cape Cod Cooperative Extension**  
[www.capecodextension.org](http://www.capecodextension.org)

**National Flood Insurance Program**  
[www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov)

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**Coastal Processes**  
[www.capecodextension.org](http://www.capecodextension.org)



**BE AWARE  
BE PREPARED**



**PROTECT OUR  
FLOODPLAINS**



HOME



LAND



BUSINESS



COMMUNITY

**PROTECT AND RESTORE CAPE COD'S BEST  
DEFENSE AGAINST DESTRUCTIVE FLOODS**



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# FIVE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT OUR FLOODPLAIN:

1

Do not walk on sand dunes or disturb vegetation; they protect beaches from erosion and help to lessen flooding during coastal storms.

2

Properly dispose of or clean up any pollutants like oil and paint; pollutants will get washed into water bodies and can damage floodplain ecosystems.

3

Keep streets clean by picking up trash and litter near storm drains so it does not wash into our local water bodies and affect flood control.

4

Do not attempt to fill in natural floodplain features like wetlands as this will disrupt the wetland's capacity to control flooding.

5

Plant trees and vegetation near streams, ponds, or other bodies of water to decrease erosion and improve water uptake.



## SAND DUNES ARE THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST FLOODING FOR HOMES AND BUSINESSES

Here are suggestions of ways people and communities can protect our dunes on Cape Cod:



### READ SIGNS NEAR DUNES AND BE AWARE OF RESTRICTED AREAS

Just walking over a dune can cause damage. Use designated dune walkovers and access points to decrease the amount of foot traffic in dunes.



### ALLOW VEGETATION AND GRASSES TO GROW NATURALLY

Do not mow beach grass or salt marshes as mowing destroys the grasses' ability to trap sand and may kill the plants. Also, do not throw yard or garden debris in the dunes.



### KEEP BOATS OFF OF THE DUNES

In some areas it is common practice to drag boats over dunes or store beach gear on dunes. These activities will damage the vegetation that keeps dunes intact.



Coastal Processes

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**FLOODPLAINS ARE CRUCIAL TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OF CAPE COD. WETLANDS AND SAND DUNES HELP PROTECT AGAINST HARMFUL FLOOD WATERS.**

## FLOODING IS A COSTLY NATURAL DISASTER ON CAPE COD

Flooding is a common and costly natural disaster on Cape Cod. Floods can be caused from coastal storms like hurricanes and nor'easters or any event that brings heavy rains. Every year, floods cause damage to property, as well as injuries and fatalities. We can all take steps to reduce our risk of flooding by protecting the land that shelters us from the storm, the floodplain.

## THE FLOODPLAIN IS NATURAL FLOOD PROTECTION

The floodplain is land which floods naturally during heavy rainfall and includes wetlands, sand dunes, the edges of streams and rivers, or any low-lying land near a water body. The floodplain acts as a sponge to soak up storm waters so they do not flood our homes. By protecting the natural floodplain, we are reducing our flood risk and saving money on future property damage.

**\$27  
MILLION**

**IN FLOOD INSURANCE  
CLAIMS OVER THE  
LAST FORTY YEARS**