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**FLASH**<sup>®</sup>  
FEDERAL ALLIANCE FOR SAFE HOMES

# Sandbags

Sandbags can redirect storm water and debris flows away from homes and other structures if they are properly filled and maintained.

## 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 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.

## 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.

NOTE: 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.

More information on flood prevention is available through FLASH. Call our toll-free help desk at **1-877-221-SAFE**, email **flash@flash.org** or log on to **www.flash.org**.

Protect your home in a *FLASH* with  
the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes!

[www.flash.org](http://www.flash.org) ■ toll-free 1-877-221-SAFE

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