

August 14, Noon

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How can I get access to my home or business?**

Access to Ellicott City's Main Street for those displaced by the recent storm will originate at the George Howard Building, 3430 Court House Drive on Sunday, Aug. 14 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Merchants, residents, building owners and their guests (friends, family members and employees, etc.) will be transported to Main Street locations by bus. All must be credentialed to gain access to the cleanup site.

Credentialing will begin at 8 a.m. Saturday and Sunday at the George Howard Building. People may also be credentialed in the Disaster Assistance Center during normal operating hours (10 a.m. - 3 p.m.)

Important note: You must 18 years of age or older to access the restricted area. Those age 16-17 will be allowed only if accompanied by a parent or guardian.

- **Is it safe for me to go into my property?**

The Health Department has provided updated guidelines to avoid hazards, prevent infection, address heat-related issues, and offer information in the event of possible illness. Safety signs will be posted at the check-in location on the weekend clean-up days. Details can also be found online at www.ECfloodrecovery.org.

- **I am interested in beginning to rebuild my property. Will I have to pay the fees to apply for permits?**

Legislation is being considered by the County Council to waive a variety of building permit fees including electrical, plumbing, water and sewer hookup, HVAC and other technical building fees. Fees will be waived through October 31.

- **What do I need to know to prepare to visit my residence or business?**

When coming to the site, residents need to:

- Wear solid, closed-toe footwear, preferably an over the ankle work boot or hiking boot.
- Wear long pants as appropriate and all are encouraged to wear a light, long sleeved shirt and bring a flashlight.

-more-

(continued)

- Consider bringing work gloves and eye protection.
- Be 18 or older, or at least 16 with a parent or guardian.
- Use available handwashing stations, cooling stations and medical stations, if needed.
- Consider bringing N95 respirator masks for exposures to mold-contamination or other hazards.
- Stay hydrated.
- Remember this is a clean-up, not recovery, weekend.
- Refrain from using candles or other open flames.
- Run water for 15 minutes before drinking.

Please do not run generators or gas powered tools in enclosed spaces. They should only be used in well ventilated areas.

- **How can my friends and family stay healthy and safe during the clean-up?**

There are ten minute breaks being taken every 30 minutes to combat the heat and humidity. A signal is being given throughout the cleanup sight to take the break

There are four cooling stations onsite.

Locations are:

- Main St/Ellicott Mills Dr.
- 8267 Main St.
- 8125 Main St.
- 3711 Maryland Ave.

There are two First Aid Stations at:

8197 Main St.
3711 Maryland Ave

- **What if I find items during the cleanup process on Main St. that are not mine? Can I turn these items in somewhere?**

There are two collection points for items found in the immediate Main St. area during cleanup. While you are cleaning up on Main St., those sites are:

- Ellicott Mills/Main St
- Near B&O Museum

- **How can I help?**

How to donate

We have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of donations. While we are so grateful, our support agencies no longer have the capacity to accept, store or distribute physical

(continued)

donations. From this point forward, if you wish to donate, please do so monetarily through one of the following organizations:

Ellicott City Partnership
www.HelpEllicottCity.com

Community Action Council of Howard County
www.cac-hc.org

United Way
www.uwcm.org/ecstrong

While there are certainly other legitimate organizations accepting monetary donations, using one of the above three avenues guarantees your donations will get where you intend.

- **How much money has been raised so far?**

More than \$500K in monetary donations have come in since the flood. A new Recovery Fund Committee will be responsible for distributing those funds. Councilman Jon Weinstein has agreed to chair.

- **How to volunteer**

More than 3,000 people have already requested information on how they may volunteer. To register, visit www.ECfloodrecovery.org.

- **How can I ask for other assistance?**

The Disaster Assistance Center is open from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. through Sunday, August 14. If you know anyone who needs support, please encourage them to stop by the Ellicott City 50+ Center located at 9401 Frederick Road, Ellicott City, MD 21042. For more information, call 410-313-2900.

- **How can I get the latest news about the recovery efforts?**

Follow Howard County Government on our flood recovery website or social media at:

www.ECfloodrecovery.org
<https://www.facebook.com/hocogov/>
<https://www.twitter.com/@HoCoGov>

If you have specific questions, you can call 410-313-2900.

- **When will electricity and water be restored to Main Street?**

(continued)

Electricity has been restored on a limited basis. Water has been restored as well. The Department of Public Works advises that potable (drinking) water in Ellicott City continues to meet all Federal and State drinking water standards. As a precaution, the County recommends that you flush (open and let the water run) all services at every level in the building, (faucet, toilets, and hose bibs) for a minimum of 15 minutes before you use the water.

If you find you do not have water service, or are having sanitary sewer issues at your property please call the Bureau of Utilities during business hours, M-F 7-4 at 410-313-4900.

- **Will I continue to be charged for my cable TV, internet and other services?**

We have been working with service providers and most are happy to work with customers affected by the flood. Contact customer service for your provider to ask for assistance.

- **I've lost my job because of the flooding. How can I get help?**

Workforce Development is partnering with the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) and Howard County Economic Development Authority to identify immediate employment opportunities for displaced workers. Staff is available to help with unemployment insurance as well. Email owd@howardcountymd.org or call 410-290-2620 and look for job postings on Facebook.

- **I am a business owner from outside the Main Street Ellicott City area and I would like to hire one of the displaced workers. How can I help?**

Businesses seeking to hire individuals on a temporary or permanent basis may contact the Office of Workforce Development at 410-290-2620 or email at owd@howardcountymd.gov. There will also be jobs from employers posted to Office of Workforce Development's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/howardworkforce

- **How will the disaster impact my scheduled trash and recycling pickup?**

TRASH, RECYCLING AND TRIM COLLECTIONS SERVICE: Collections will be made on their normal day and all normal rules apply. The Alpha Ridge Landfill also will waive tipping fees for Howard County private residents transporting debris from flooding for through August 17.

Visit www.HowardCountyRecycles.org or call 410-313-6444. Recycling, trash and yard trim DROP-OFF is available at the Alpha Ridge Landfill, Monday-Saturday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. More details can be found at <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/ARL>.

(continued)

- **What about my mail delivery in the impacted areas?**

The United States Postal Service has modified its delivery plan to assist those with mail service interruption because of the flooding. Residents should visit the Ellicott City Post Office, 3375 Ellicott Center Drive, Ellicott City, 21043-9996 between 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mon-Fri, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Saturday. The phone number is 410-640-1340.

Mail can be placed on hold for up to 30 days. Proper ID is required for establishment of Hold and Pick-Up. A designated pick-up location within the lobby will be available for quick and easy access. Change of address forms can be found on line at www.usps.com.

- **My car is still in the river. How soon until it is retrieved?**

All 19 of Howard County's cars have been pulled from the river. The police department is in the process of contacting the final two car owners. In the coming days, crews from other jurisdictions will be removing the final few vehicles.

Please refrain from going in or near the river in an attempt to access vehicles or other items. It is unsafe and many of the vehicles are inaccessible. This applies to citizens and towing companies not contracted by the county.

- **What does it mean when I see a marking on my building? Does it mean that my property is not accessible?**

For those residents or business owners accessing their properties on Main Street, you may see an orange "X" spray painted on a window. An "X" does not necessarily mean that the building is unsafe to enter or that the structural integrity has been compromised. This "X" simply indicates that a complete secondary search of the property took place by our emergency personnel.

- **How can I get an insurance adjustor or licensed contractor to evaluate my property?**

Contractors and insurance adjustors may accompany credentialed property owners to their sites.

- **I am a resident or business owner whose building was flooded. My flood insurance requires me to take certain actions (opening windows, pumping out the basement, etc.), but in order to get paid by my policy, I have to do this within a certain number of days. Due to my property falling in the no access zone designated by Howard County, I was not allowed to access my property to take these required actions. What can I do to avoid problems with my insurance companies?**

While Howard County understands that you may need to get to your property to fulfill

(continued)

your obligations to your insurance policy, please understand that the safety of citizens and responders must remain our first priority. To help reduce any conflict with your insurance companies, please document all actions that you take, including efforts to get to your property. Also, please contact the Maryland Insurance Administration at 410-468-2340 or 800-492-6116. These issues are often resolved on a case by case basis and the MIA will help you navigate these issues.

- **How can I get mental health support or speak with a counselor?**

The Howard County Mental Health Authority is responsible for planning, managing and monitoring publicly funded mental health services in Howard County. For information call (410) 313-7350.

- **How can I file an insurance claim?**

The Maryland Insurance Administration has representatives available to assist Marylanders filing insurance claims as a result of the flooding in Howard County. Consumers can contact the Maryland Insurance Administration at 410-468-2340 or 1-800-492-6116 if they need assistance with property and casualty claims related to the storm.

- **Will financial assistance be available from FEMA or other sources?**

Small Business Administration signed Howard County's request to make low-interest disaster loans available to homeowners, property owners, businesses and nonprofit agencies.

Property and homeowners can talk to Customer Service Representatives from the Small Business Administration at the Disaster Loan Outreach Center at the 50+ Center at 9401 Frederick Rd.

- **How can I find a licensed contractor?**

Please be sure to independently verify any licensed contractors. License status of contractors and salespeople can be reviewed at <https://www.dllr.state.md.us/license/mhic/>