

August 15, 8 p.m.

Frequently Asked Questions

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

Residents, merchants and building owners will be given extended dawn to dusk access to Ellicott City's Main Street area starting Thursday, Aug. 18 and continuing through Monday, Aug. 22. After this five-day window, Main Street will be closed for three weeks to allow county public works crews and other utility workers the time they need to complete critical work with the goal of reopening Main Street to pedestrian traffic, hopefully around Sept. 16.

Specific details of the five-day window will be available on Tuesday, Aug. 16

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

The County Council will hold a public hearing on Wednesday to advance legislation that is being considered 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.

- **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 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

(continued)

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**

Thousands have already expressed their interest in helping our community and the commitment is appreciated. As volunteers are needed, the county will be contacting those already registered. If there is a need for additional volunteers, we will post a request on our website.

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

The Disaster Assistance Center will be open the week of Aug. 15 during established hours, Monday to Wednesday from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m., Thursday to Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. 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?**

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.

(continued)

- **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 Aug. 24.

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>.

- **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.

(continued)

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

Howard County has pulled 19 cars from the river and car owners have been contacted by the Howard County Police Department. 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 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

(continued)

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. It is open weekdays 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Sat - Sun 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Refer to the [SBA Fact Sheet](#) online for more information.

- **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/>