



410-313-2022 / [ECFloodRecovery@HowardCountymd.gov](mailto:ECFloodRecovery@HowardCountymd.gov)

September 30, noon

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

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

The County reopened all of Main Street on Sept. 17 except for the area just east of Old Columbia Pike and just west of Maryland Avenue. Credentials will be required to have full, around the clock access to this area. Businesses will be required to obtain wristband credentials for their own clients, customers and contractors.

Credentialing will be available at the Roger Carter Community Center, 3000 Milltown Drive, daily from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. All previous credentials remain valid.

Residents will be allowed to reoccupy their units if their building has been inspected, approved and deemed safe for habitation. Residents should check with landlords before reoccupying. The County will contact building owners of properties that are deemed unsafe.

For residents, personal vehicles will be allowed into the area for loading and unloading only. All credentialed and approved vehicle traffic on Main Street will be one-way eastbound between Old Columbia Pike and Maryland Avenue. Business owners, construction crews and contractor vehicles will be allowed to park along Main Street. No overnight parking will be permitted.

The Patapsco River Bridge has reopened to two-way traffic for access to Maryland Avenue and St. Paul Street. Commuters are urged to use alternate routes.

On-street parking of personal vehicles will remain prohibited on Main Street. Parking will be available in all county lots, with the exception of Lot "B" which is located on the eastern portion of Main Street. Parking in Lot "D" will be limited and two-way access will be from Old Columbia Pike onto Roussey Lane. There will be no direct access to or from Main Street.

It is anticipated that Main Street between Old Columbia Pike and Maryland Avenue will reopen on Oct. 6 at 5:00 p.m.

As we move into the next phase of Ellicott City's recovery, those residents and businesses still in need of information or assistance may call 410-313-2900 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Attendants will be available to help direct those in need to the available resources.

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### **When can I get back into my home permanently?**

As apartment buildings are deemed safe for re-entry by county building and fire inspectors and structural engineers, landlords have been asked to reach out to their tenants when buildings can be reoccupied.

Access to the building may not be from restricted areas and there must be a plan in place to prevent residents from accessing restricted areas, including parking outside the restricted areas. All utilities (water, sewer, electric and gas) must be restored before individuals are allowed to return.

Returning residents would also be required to wear Howard County government-issued credentials. Residents are encouraged to contact their landlords if they have not been in touch with them. For more information or assistance, call 410-313-2900.

### **What resources are available?**

We have made many resources available at [www.ecfloodrecovery.org](http://www.ecfloodrecovery.org) Under the Resident and business services tab are helpful flyers for resident and business resources, as well as financing resources.

### **What parking is available in Downtown Ellicott City?**

On-street parking of personal vehicles will remain prohibited on Main Street. Parking will be available in all county lots, with the exception of Lot "B" which is located on the eastern portion of Main Street. Parking in Lot "D" will be limited and two-way access will be from Old Columbia Pike onto Roussey Lane. There will be no direct access to or from Main Street.

### **What other kind of work still needs to be completed along Main Street?**

As the county continues to reopen sections of Ellicott City, there is still much work to be done. A retaining wall needs to be restored adjacent to the B&O Museum. A county contractor will soon begin to restore the channel wall underneath the Brewery Building and also between Court Avenue and Parking Lot "F."

BGE installed a new, 4-inch natural gas line on Main Street from Court Avenue to Maryland Avenue and is in the process of connecting this line to nearly 70 properties along Main Street.

### **I am interested in beginning to rebuild my property. How will the permit process work?**

The County has instituted an expedited permitting process for properties damaged by the July 30 flash flood. This accelerated process will allow permit applicants to schedule appointments from Howard County's Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits (DILP) on the hour between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays with the goal of issuing a permit the same day. The appointments will be held in the George Howard Building, 3430 Court House Drive.

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The number of appointment slots could be expanded depending on the volume of requests. The expedited process will begin immediately and will be in effect through Dec. 31. Permit fees will continue to be waived through the end of the year as well. The applicant, building owner, contractors and any architects or engineers involved in the repair project will be asked to attend the appointment to address any potential comments from reviewers, allowing for an immediate issuance of the permit.

Necessary Historic Preservation Commission approval must be obtained prior to the submission of any construction drawings to the county. In these cases, grant and tax credit opportunities are available, however they require approval from the Maryland Historical Trust. In-kind repairs do not require approval but they are not eligible for financial assistance. For help with HPC approval, call 410-313-2350.

Projects that involve a food service facility may require county Health Department Food Protection Program approval and approval is encouraged before entering the permit process. For health department support, call 410-313-1772.

Not all work will require a permit. General cleanup, replacing drywall on non-load bearing walls (including the replacement or addition of insulation), replacing any finishes on walls and ceilings and replacing doors and windows without a new rough opening framing is allowed without county approval.

To see the complete details about the flood repair permitting process, go to [www.ecfloodrecovery.org](http://www.ecfloodrecovery.org)

To schedule an appointment, applicants may call Elaine Hauck at 410-313-2433.

### **What about historical preservation questions?**

Preservation Maryland will open a temporary resource center in Ellicott City to assist owners of historic properties in their recovery efforts. The center will provide technical assistance to help owners rebuild damaged historic properties along Main Street, connect them with consultants and contractors, help them with the historic district review process and provide them with information on relevant local, state and federal financial assistance and tax credit programs.

### **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.

### **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/>

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

U.S. 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 Center of the Small Business Administration by calling 800-659-2955 and refer to the [SBA Fact Sheet](#) online for more information. The deadline to submit disaster loan applications for physical damage is Oct. 11, 2016.

### **How can I receive assistance from the Recovery Fund Committee?**

More than \$1 million in monetary donations has come in since the flood to the United Way of Central Maryland (UWCM) and the Ellicott City Partnership (ECP). Councilman Jon Weinstein agreed to chair a Recovery Fund Committee that is responsible for distributing those funds. The committee's work is complete on developing procedures and applications for distributing relief funds.

To be eligible for #ECStrong Recovery Fund assistance from ECP or United Way, applicants must be directly impacted by the July 30 flood. The impact must have occurred within ECP's geographic mission area for individuals, businesses, or property owners to be eligible for the funds raised by the organization. Individual applicants seeking humanitarian assistance, including those who live outside the ECP mission area are eligible for funds raised by the UWCM.

Grants are available (subject to the availability of funds) for those who are uninsured or underinsured, have necessary expenses and serious needs and are unable to meet those expenses or needs through other available resources. Applicants are strongly encouraged to complete on-line applications available at <https://ecpartnership.org/ecstrong-recovery-fund/> expected to be available beginning this week. Check the website for the application deadline.

Questions regarding the applications can also be directed to [ECPReliefGrant@gmail.com](mailto:ECPReliefGrant@gmail.com). Applicants requiring assistance with completing the application should contact the Community Action Council who will provide one-on-one support at the Gateway Building, 6751 Columbia Gateway Drive, Columbia, MD 21046 and will provide phone support by calling 410-313-6440.

Grants are capped at \$1,500 for individuals and up to \$15,000 for business and property owners. Additional information about the grant amounts, eligibility, application process, as well as a guide to additional resources is available at the ECP website.

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

Those in need of recovery assistance should call 410-313-0814.

### **How can I help?**

#### **How to donate**

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The outpouring of donations has been overwhelming. While we are so grateful, our support agencies no longer have the capacity to accept, store or distribute physical donations. If you wish to donate, please do so monetarily through one of the following organizations:

United Way of Central Maryland

[www.uwcm.org/ecstrong](http://www.uwcm.org/ecstrong)

Ellicott City Partnership

[www.HelpEllicottCity.com](http://www.HelpEllicottCity.com)

Community Action Council of Howard County

[www.cac-hc.org](http://www.cac-hc.org)

While there are certainly other legitimate organizations accepting monetary donations, using one of the above three avenues helps guarantee your donations will go to use where you intend.

### **How to volunteer**

The Volunteer Center Serving Howard County, a program of the Columbia Association and a local clearinghouse for volunteerism, will be the new entry point for volunteers interested in helping with flood recovery efforts in Historic Ellicott City.

[VolunteerHoward.org](http://VolunteerHoward.org), an online service, will make it easier for individuals and groups of volunteers to be organized for recovery missions as they arise.

### **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](http://www.ECfloodrecovery.org)

<https://www.facebook.com/hocogov/>

<https://www.twitter.com/@HoCoGov>

### **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, Mon- Fri. from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 410-313-4900.

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

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

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

Trash, recycling and trim collections will be made on their normal day and all normal rules apply (with the exception of the restricted areas of Main Street). For information, visit [www.HowardCountyRecycles.org](http://www.HowardCountyRecycles.org) or call 410-313-6444.

Recycling, trash and yard trim DROP-OFF is available at the Alpha Ridge Landfill, Mon. –Sat. from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. More details can be found at <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/ARL> or refer to the department's Historic Ellicott City Cleanup and Curbside Collections page <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Public-Works/Bureau-Of-Environmental-Services/Ellicott-City-Debris-CleanUp> for more answers and information.

### **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 during the hours Mon. to Fri from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or Saturday from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. 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](http://www.usps.com).

### **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](mailto: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](mailto:owd@howardcountymd.gov) . There will also be jobs from employers posted to Office of Workforce Development's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/howardworkforce](http://www.facebook.com/howardworkforce)

### **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-

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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.

**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.

**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, an orange "X" spray painted on a window 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.

**What about public transportation?**

RTA of Central Maryland's Route 405/Yellow detour has been lifted and regular service has resumed in both directions to all designated stops near Ellicott City.

If you have questions or need assistance, give the RTA a call at 1-800-270-9553 or visit [www.transitRTA.com](http://www.transitRTA.com)