



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

September 9, 5 p.m.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

**I understand that there will be a town hall meeting to discuss the recovery efforts. When and where will that be held?**

An Ellicott City Recovery Town Hall meeting has been rescheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 14 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Veterans Elementary School, 4355 Montgomery Road in Ellicott City.

The Town Hall was previously scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 15 and was moved to resolve a scheduling conflict. Kittleman will provide updates on recovery efforts as well as field questions from residents, businesses and property owners.

Jim Robey, senior advisor for Community Recovery and Chairman of the Historic Ellicott City Recovery Community Advisory Group, will attend, as will Council Vice Chairman Jon Weinstein, who represents Ellicott City and was appointed by Kittleman to chair the #ECStrong Recovery Fund Committee.

**What resources are available to local businesses?**

The Howard County Economic Development Authority will hold its next business resource info sessions on Wednesday, Sept. 7 at the Miller Library in the Patapsco Room from 1:00-2:30 and 3:30-5:00.

Representatives from the Maryland Insurance Administration and FEMA will be onsite to present information and answer questions.

The U. S. Small Business Administration announced that it is closing its Disaster Loan Outreach Center in Ellicott City on Thursday, Sept. 15 at 3 p.m. The Center has been in operation since Aug. 12 providing one-on-one assistance to businesses and residents that were affected by the July 30 heavy rains and flooding.

SBA representatives are encouraging businesses of all sizes, private nonprofit organizations, homeowners and renters that need answers to questions or assistance with their disaster loan application to visit the Center before it closes. The deadline to submit disaster loan applications for physical damage is Oct. 11, 2016.

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

The Department of Community Resources and Services will host a “Resident Return Preparedness Meeting” from on Sunday, Sept. 11 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the Ellicott City 50+ Center, 9411 Frederick Road. Panelists on hand will discuss a variety of topics, including landlord-tenant questions, parking, safety, environmental health, and resources to replace food, shelter, furniture and remediate mold.

Main Street between Court Avenue and Forrest Street will become the latest portion of the road to open to pedestrian and vehicular traffic Sept. 12, allowing more businesses to either reopen or to begin rebuilding efforts following the July 30 flash flood.

Main Street will be reopened to credentialed pedestrians during daylight hours beginning Saturday, Sept. 17 and then to the rest of the public on Sept. 20.

Those with credentials will be able to take vehicles onto Main Street for drop-off and pick-up but there will be no on-street parking for those three days. Main Street will also be limited to one-way traffic. Those who don't already have credentials can obtain them by visiting the Roger Carter Community Center, 3000 Milltown Drive in Ellicott City, from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., daily through Sept. 20. Those with credentials can also obtain wristbands for one-day access for friends, helpers or volunteers to help during those three days.

At 5 p.m. Sept. 20, Main Street will reopen to the public for pedestrian traffic only. However, since the area is still an active construction zone, it has yet-to-be determined when vehicles will be allowed on Main Street.

The county retracted the perimeter of Main Street's “no-access” area on Aug. 23, restoring access to the top of Main Street from Ellicott Mills Drive to Court Avenue, and on Old Columbia Pike down to Main Street.

These changes allowed businesses at the western end of Main Street and along Tonge Row a chance to reopen. On-street parking on Main Street continues to be prohibited and parking in general will be tight. Limited parking will be available on parking Lot “D” by Roussey Lane to accommodate employees and customers of those accessible businesses.

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 410-313-0863 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.

### **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.

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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 410-313-0863.

**I understand there will be some street and lot repaving. Where?**

Re-paving work will begin on Lot "D" soon and is expected to be completed by Sept. 20.

The county has repaved Merryman and Hill streets and half of Lot "F" (approximately 46 spaces) has been re-opened to the public. Some spots are located in Lot "D" as well.

**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. More sidewalks must be installed, buildings still need to be shored up, significant stabilization and repair work is needed along Hamilton Street and major work must be done in front of Salon Marielle.

BGE is installing a new, 4-inch natural gas line on Main Street from Court Avenue to Maryland Avenue. During this extensive repair, BGE will be 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.

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

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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.howardcountymd.gov/ECStrong-Recovery-Resources](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/ECStrong-Recovery-Resources).

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/>

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

A Recovery Assistance Office will be open weekdays, Mondays and Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Wednesdays to Fridays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Ellicott City 50+ Fitness Center at 9411 Frederick Road until at least Sept. 20. Those in need can also reach office staff at 410-313-0814.

### **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.

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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. The office will be closed Monday, Sept. 5 for Labor Day but will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. through Friday, September 9. Refer to the [SBA Fact Sheet](#) online for more information.

## **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](http://www.HelpEllicottCity.com)

Community Action Council of Howard County  
[www.cac-hc.org](http://www.cac-hc.org)

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

While there are certainly other legitimate organizations accepting monetary donations, using one of the above three avenues helps guarantee 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**

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, an online service, will make it easier for individuals and groups of volunteers to be organized for recovery missions as they arise.

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### **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?**

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.

### **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. 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).

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**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 410-313-7350.

**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?**

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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.

**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)