

Visitor Evacuation Guidelines

Visitors located on or west of Main Street should follow traffic control instructions to relocate to higher ground east of Birch Street during a flood event. Visitors should shelter in their vehicle until directed to evacuate to an alternate location. Visitors with travel trailers staying in local RV parks are encouraged to abandon their trailers and join evacuees on higher ground east of Birch Street due to the very short evacuation time. Visitors with motorhomes or towing campers will relocate to the east side of the County Fairgrounds until directed to evacuate to alternate locations. Refer to the map provided by your hosts and follow traffic control directions.

Evacuation Notification Procedures:

The La Veta Marshal will issue an evacuation order, activate the sirens, and contact Code Red dispatch upon confirmation of imminent flooding. The siren warning will use a series of three tones using a pattern of a constant three-minute tone, followed by a two-minute break for a total of 15 minutes. Code Red notifications will be issued to registered individuals and groups in the identified evacuation zones. The siren alerts the entire town to an impending flood, but the Code Red notification identifies the zone or zones that need to evacuate.



COVID-19 Considerations

The biggest impact of COVID-19 on evacuation operations is on the participants in the Flood Buddy Program. Flood Buddy hosts and guests should consider their personal health risks and decide whether or not the program is the correct option for them. If it remains the preferred option, hosts and guests should discuss and define the protocols (e.g. distancing, masking) to be implemented during an evacuation.

Sheltering in cars limits COVID exposure for evacuees not participating in the Flood Buddy program. Go Kits should contain masks and hand sanitizer in the event evacuees need to visit an aid station during the event or are directed to alternate evacuation sites.



FLOOD PREPARATION

For La Veta Residents & Visitors

2020

Local
Postal Customer

*****EQRWSS****

PRESRT STD
EC RWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM Retail

The Situation:

La Veta faces a high risk for flash floods for the next 5-10 years

The Spring Fire in 2018 caused extensive alterations to the Cucharas River watershed, resulting in significant increases in the likelihood and severity of flash flooding in the Town of La Veta. Existing models prepared by federal agencies indicate that structures, residents, Town of La Veta government operations, La Veta Fire Protection District facilities, and the Ryus Street and CO Hwy 12 bridges at the northern entrance to La Veta are vulnerable. Of particular concern during post-wildfire flooding events is the accompanying debris flow which substantially increases the destructive potential of the flood due to the unpredictability of flow rates and inundation patterns.

In the event of a flood La Veta residents and visitors may have as little as 25-30 minutes after notification to evacuate. State and local government agencies are taking steps to mitigate potential impacts to the community but DO NOT have the resources to perform individual evacuations.

YOUR SAFETY AND SURVIVAL WILL ALSO DEPEND ON YOUR PERSONAL PREPARATION EFFORTS!

The Good News:

With preparation, you will come through this safely!

Government and community organizations are doing their part to prepare for a flood:

- Channel restoration projects have reduced the potential for flooding after a heavy rainfall
- Gauges have been installed in watershed streams to provide critical early warnings of immanent flood conditions
- Sirens have been installed to alert the public when evacuation is required
- An evacuation plan has been developed and refined to synchronize the response efforts of Town resources
- A low water crossing has been built where the Cuchara River crosses 2nd Street to provide an escape route after the flood surge has passed
- Community efforts led by the Colorado Office of Emergency Management are focusing on outreach to assist individuals with access and functional needs in developing a viable plan of action
- The Town of La Veta continues to engage with Huerfano County, State of Colorado, and Federal agencies to develop resiliency measures to enable an efficient recovery from the effects of a flood

To ensure that you and your family are safe, you have to do your part:

- Make a plan that fits your personal needs
- Assemble a “Go Kit”
- Connect with your neighbors
- Stay informed

La Veta Resident Planning Guidelines

There are two basic evacuation options:

- Participate in the Flood Buddy program to shelter for 12-24 hours in the home of a Flood Buddy host. Contact Town Hall for details and registration forms
- Drive to the higher ground east of Birch Street and shelter in your car until directed to evacuate to alternate locations or return home

Deciding which option is right for you depends on your personal needs. Regardless of the option you select, you will want to:

- Assemble a “Go Kit” containing the items you will need to make it on your own for at least three days.
- Identify the flood zone in which your home is located. (If you are not sure, contact Town Hall).
- Register with Code Red and get a NOAA Weather Radio to stay informed about flood conditions and evacuation instructions.
- Provide your evacuation status information by calling (719) 738-3000 ext. 321 and/or logging on to and registering your status at <http://evac.huerfano.us>

The Town of La Veta is developing a workbook that will assist in your efforts to construct a plan and decide the items you need to place in your “Go Kit”. We will distribute this workbook as soon it is available.