Protect your equipment from a flood

Tips for those who live in areas subject to flooding



Did you know?

Service and repair work on natural gas equipment should only be performed by a registered gas contractor. Service and repair work on electrical devices should only be performed by a qualified electrician.

What to do before a flood

Natural gas appliances

If you have enough advance warning prior to a flood, here's how you can protect your equipment:

- Have a registered gas contractor remove the electric motor, burner and controls from the furnace, and shut off the gas and electric supply.
- Have a registered gas contractor remove hot water tanks, clothes dryers and ranges from your building.
- If you have natural gas clothes dryers, ranges and other appliances removed, ensure the gas supply valve is shut off to the appliance first.
- Cap and properly seal the gas pipe leading to the appliance shutoff valve. This is to prevent the back flow of flood water into the gas piping system.

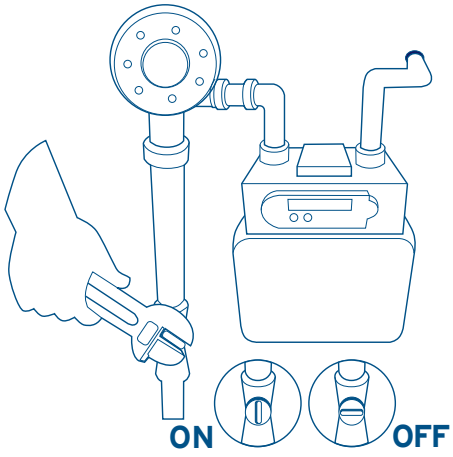
Electrical devices

- Find the electrical main power switch in your home. Understand how to safely shut it off should that be required if your area is going to experience flooding.
- Move any electrical devices to a place that is out of the path of a potential flood.
- Turn off electrical devices and unplug them from the wall.

If you are evacuating your premises

Natural gas

Shut off your gas valve at the meter. You can turn your gas off at the main shutoff valve on the inlet pipe next to your gas meter. Using a wrench or other suitable tool, give the valve a quarter turn in either direction so that it is crosswise to the pipe. (See diagram below.)



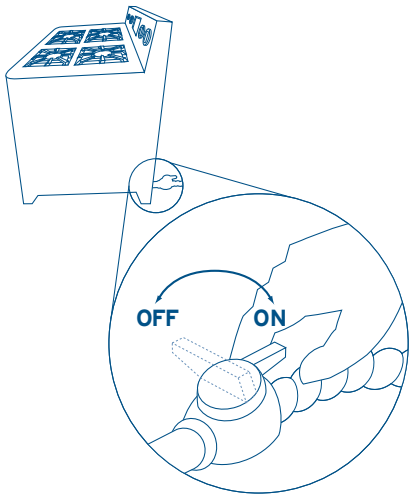
Electricity

Electricity and water are a dangerous mix. If you see water entering your building, do not attempt to shut off the main power switch in your home.

Avoid electrical lines when evacuating and do not go into basements or low-lying structures where electricity may be present.

If you don't have enough time or a licensed contractor is not available

- Shut off the gas supply valve to the appliance (usually found on the gas line to the appliance).
- Do not drain your hot water tank—just shut off the water leading to and from the tank.



What to do after a flood

Threats to you and your health can still exist once flooding has ceased. Do not enter your home until local authorities have declared it safe to do so.

If you see water in your building, do not attempt to shut off the main power switch in your home and avoid any electrical lines or basements and other low lying structures where electricity may be present.

Wet electrical wiring is extremely dangerous, so make sure the main electrical supply is shut off. Any loose wires should be considered "live" and a definite hazard.

CAUTION: If you smell gas, or if there is evidence of a gas leak, don't enter the building.

Call the FortisBC 24-hour emergency line at **1-800-663-9911**, your local fire department or **911**.

Who to call

A registered gas contractor

If water levels were high enough to cover either your gas meter or electricity meter, call FortisBC to check your meters before using any of your equipment. Flood waters may have shifted your home or caused other stresses to the gas piping or electrical wiring.

- Don't try to put natural gas appliances back in service yourself.
- Gas appliances that have been flooded should not be used until inspected by a registered gas contractor to ensure your safety.
- A registered gas contractor will check, clean, repair and pressure-test all gas pipes that have been clogged with mud or debris.
- Switches, controls, thermostats, furnace heat exchangers, burner and pilot parts and rusting metal parts can also be damaged.

Please note, the cost of restoring some appliances to a safe operating condition can exceed the cost of a new appliance.

A qualified electrician

- All electrical wiring in buildings that have been partially or fully covered by flood water must be checked by a qualified electrician or electrical inspector before being put into service again.

For more information

- For more information on flood safety, contact the Provincial Emergency Program in your region, or visit **pep.bc.ca**.
- For more information about natural gas safety, visit: **fortisbc.com** or call **1-888-224-2710**.
- For more information about electricity safety, visit **fortisbc.com** or call **1-866-436-7847**.
- The BC Safety Authority has useful information on both electricity and gas. Visit **safetyauthority.ca**.

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