



KING COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT

516 Third Avenue • Room W 1039 • Seattle, WA 98104
206.296.1020 • info@kingcountyfloodcontrol.org
www.kingcountyfloodcontrol.org

King County Flood Control District Frequently Asked Questions

What is the King County Flood Control District?

The King County Flood Control District is a special-purpose government created to provide funding and policy oversight for flood protection projects and programs in King County. A Board of Supervisors composed of all nine King County Councilmembers oversees the Flood Control District. The Water and Land Resources Division of the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks develops and implements approved flood protection projects and programs.

Why was the King County Flood Control District created?

Most of the 500 or so flood protection facilities of King County were built in the early 1960's. They are not built to current standards and many are now reaching the end of their useful lives. Our flood protection infrastructure needs to be strengthened to protect lives, homes and businesses that are crucial to our regional economy. A flood could pose a significant risk to public safety, regionally important economic centers and transportation corridors.

The King County Flood Control District was created to ensure that sufficient funding is available to address the maintenance, repair, and reconstruction of the region's critical flood protection facilities. Up to \$345 million in priority repairs and upgrades are needed on the various flood containment levees and bank stabilization projects. Funding limitations in the past has not been sufficient to meet these needs.

How is the King County Flood Control District funded?

Funding for the King County Flood Control District comes from a county-wide property levy tax of 10 cents per \$1,000 assessed value. This amounts to \$40 per year on a \$400,000 home. The levy will raise roughly \$35 million a year and dramatically increase the number of projects addressed—from only two or three a year to 55 started in 2008. The funding has also increased the Flood Control District's ability to leverage state and federal matching funds—approximately \$28 million in 2008.

What programs does the King County Flood Control District fund?

The King County Flood Control District implements the King County Flood Hazard Management Plan, which was proposed by King County Executive Ron Sims and enacted by the King County Council in January 2007. The Plan identifies up to \$345 million in priority repairs and upgrades, including work on flood containment levees and bank stabilization projects. Additionally, it provides for a regional flood warning center and emergency response, flood facility maintenance, public education and outreach, mapping and technical studies, and mechanisms for citizen inquiry and public response.

How are the programs developed and implemented?

While the Board of Supervisors functions as the primary governing body for the King County Flood Control District, several committees and project partners offer input. An Advisory Committee consisting of 15 elected officials representing floodplain cities and cities with significant population provides recommendations on the Flood Control District's work program and budget. Four basin technical committees ensure that basin-scale issues and technical information are factored into the decision-making process. They comprise of city staff from jurisdictions of each major river basin—the South Fork Skykomish and Snoqualmie Rivers, Cedar and Sammamish Rivers, Green/Duwamish River and White River.

The Flood Control District also partners with a wide range of external entities—from state and federal agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to local governments, watershed groups and tribal governments.

The Flood Control District contracts with the King County Department of Natural Resources' Water and Land Resource Division to carry out approved flood protection projects and programs.

What areas of King County do the flood protection facilities cover?

The 500 or so flood protection facilities span 119 miles of King County, protecting major business centers, residences and critical public infrastructure. They cover at least \$7 billion of assessed value that include Boeing facilities, Southcenter Mall and distribution centers for medical centers, grocery stores and gas stations. Approximately 65,000 jobs are located in these areas. A one-day shutdown of economic activity in these floodplains would cost the region at least \$46 million in lost economic output, according to estimates.

How often has King County experienced flood-related disasters?

Since 1990, King County floodplains have been declared a federal flood disaster area 11 times. The floods of late 2006 threatened public safety and caused property damage, including \$33 million in damage to the flood protection facilities.

According to University of Washington scientists, climate change is projected to increase the frequency of flooding in most western Washington river basins. Floods in future years are expected to exceed the capacity and protective abilities of existing flood protection facilities, thereby threatening property, lives, major transportation corridors, communities and regional economic centers.

How do I get information about the King County Flood Control District?

To find out more about the King County Flood Control District:

- Visit the website at www.kingcountyfloodcontrol.org
- Call the King County Flood Control District at 206.296.1020
- Email inquiries to info@kingcountyfloodcontrol.org