

Community Preparedness



Flood Mapping: A Foundation for Preparedness



Flood maps help identify areas that are more likely to flood and show where water may spread during high-water events. These maps are important tools for helping communities plan where to build, how to protect infrastructure and how to respond during emergencies. They support better land use planning, guide emergency response efforts, and help inform decisions about flood protection measures such as dykes and drainage improvements.

Saskatchewan has a long history of using flood maps to reduce risk. In the late 1970s, the province took part in national floodplain mapping efforts that helped over 20 communities map and formally recognize flood-prone areas. Over time, changing water conditions and periods of environmental variability highlighted the need for new and updated flood maps that reflect current conditions.

Prompted by widespread flooding in the early 2010s and persistent wet conditions until 2015, the Water Security Agency assessed flood risk in 75 communities across the province to identify locations that would benefit most from modern flood mapping. Several communities have now completed flood mapping processes, and work continues through federal and provincial partnerships to expand access to modern flood maps. More recent investments have focused on creating detailed, technology-supported maps that show floodplain boundaries, water depths and flow patterns more accurately by using tools such as LiDAR elevation data and detailed river surveys. The Water Security Agency continues to work with communities that face a higher flood risk to support the development of up-to-date flood maps to support planning and decision-making.

Flood maps are also reflected in provincial planning rules. Regulations related to flooding were updated in 2025 to require assessment of risks associated with now a 1:200-year flood. Updated standards guide how communities plan development in flood-prone areas, helping ensure that new construction, redevelopment and emergency planning are informed by consistent, modern flood information.

Why It Matters

Flood maps help communities understand where flooding may occur and how severe it could be. This information supports safer community planning, reduces damage to homes and infrastructure, and lowers recovery costs after flood events. By identifying flood-prone areas early, communities can take informed action to reduce risk, protect essential services and ease stress on residents during high-water events. Over time, flood mapping helps build resilience by supporting smarter planning and stronger preparedness in the face of environmental variability.

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