

Drainage

- Check your home's drainage system. Maintaining the drainage system on private property is the owner's responsibility.
- Make sure your drainage system directs water away from your foundation and not on to your neighbor's property. Never discharge water over the side of a steep hill.
- Clean your gutters and downspouts. Check your gutters once a week during fall and winter. Just one wind or rainstorm can clog a well-flowing drainage system.
- Rake up leaves. Leaves clog drains, and that which can lead to flooding.



- Seattle Public Utilities' yard waste subscribers can put out extra bags of leaves during the fall and winter for pick-up at no extra charge. Call (206) 684-3000 for more information.
- Water is the most common cause for of unstable slopes, mud slides and erosion. Check your property for signs of earth movement, such as leaning trees, or cracks in the soil and under sidewalks. If you have a problem, contact a soils engineer (see the Yellow Pages, under "Engineers-Geotechnical-Soils") to evaluate the situation.
- In general, trees and plants with strong root structures help prevent soil erosion but do not prevent landslides.

Sewer Backups

- Your home's side sewer runs from the house to the mainline sewer in the street. Maintaining the side sewer is the owner's responsibility. Keep roots or other obstructions from blocking your home's side sewer. If you need repairs for a side sewer backup, look under "Plumbing, Drains and Sewer Cleaning" in The Yellow Pages.

- If there is a heavy storm and sewage backs up through sinks or toilets, call Seattle Public Utilities' sewer and drainage maintenance staff, (206) 386-1230. City workers will check and remove blockages in the main sewer line. If the problem is the result of too much storm water in the system, you may have to wait until the storm has subsided to have the backup resolved.

Preventing Serious Health Problems from a Sewer Backup

- Turn off all power to eliminate electrical hazards.
- Keep children and pets away from the area.
- Thoroughly clean the contaminated area. Use rubber gloves and disinfectants.
- Discard saturated wall-to-wall carpet and pad; clean all hard surfaces with hot water and soap, then rinse with a bleach solution of one tablespoon of household bleach to one gallon of water.
- Public Health-Seattle and King County has more detailed information, (206) 296-4632.

Preventing Neighborhood Drainage Problems

- Never block any part of the city's drainage system. Do not put leaves, dirt, grass clippings or any materials in ditches, culverts or drains. Doing so can cause flooding.
- It is against the law to dump any material into the drainage system. To report illegal dumping, call (206) 684-7587.



Power Outages

- Call the Seattle City Light Power Outage Hotline at (206) 684-7400 for a recording of all known outages. If your area is not mentioned, let us know.
- Have a power outage kit, including a flashlight with batteries, lantern, matches, glow-in-the-dark light sticks, wind-up clock, portable radio, manual can opener and mylar blanket.
- Use hot water sparingly. Most hot water tanks will retain heat for up to 24 hours. This can also be your source of emergency drinking water.
- Know how to manually override your electric garage door if you have one.
- Unplug sensitive electronic equipment. Switch electrical appliances off to prevent fires and equipment damage. Leave one or two lights on to let you know when service is restored.
- Dress in layers to conserve body heat. Close doors, windows, curtains and unused fireplace dampers to preserve heat.
- Use battery-powered flashlights for illumination. Avoid candles, oil lamps or anything with an open flame.
- Adequately vent fueled space heaters (e.g., kerosene, propane, alcohol) to avoid fatal carbon monoxide gas buildup.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer closed as much as possible to keep food fresh. A full refrigerator will maintain safe temperatures for up to six hours; a full freezer for up to two days. Discard at-risk refrigerated foods that are warmer than 45 degrees Fahrenheit. If in doubt, throw it out.

- If used incorrectly, generators pose a significant hazard to both the user and crews attempting to restore power. Plug appliances and fixtures directly into the outlets of the generator, not into your home circuitry. Be sure to use generators in a well-ventilated area.
- When power is restored, turn on electrical appliances gradually. Sudden heavy consumption can damage the electrical system and extend the outage.

Streets and Sidewalks

- Traffic signals can be twisted to face the wrong direction or lose power during a storm. Treat all intersections with malfunctioning signals as all-way stops and use extreme caution. Traffic signs can fall. To report signal or sign problems that create dangerous situations and/or in circumstances where immediate traffic control is needed, call 911. Otherwise, call Seattle Transportation's traffic shop at (206) 386-1206.
- Fallen trees, mud from landslides, or other debris can block streets or sidewalks. If conditions are dangerous, call 911. Otherwise, call Seattle Transportation's 24-hour street emergency number: (206) 386-1218. (During the day, call (206) 684-7508 for emergencies north of Denny Way).
- Sidewalks are the responsibility of the adjacent property owner. Keep the sidewalks next to your home or business free of ice, snow or slippery leaves.
- Do not drive through a flooded street if you cannot see the bottom of the water - you cannot be sure how deep it is, and it could be very dangerous. If you have any doubts whatsoever about your safety, do not drive through a flooded area. If you choose to drive through shallow water, driving slowly could keep upward splashes from stalling the engine.
- Beware of ice. When it's cold, drive as if there might be ice on the pavement—slow down and allow extra room between vehicles. Fog or early morning conditions can result in black ice. Streets in the shade or elevated roadways often have ice when other places are clear.
- Snow plans: Know the snow plan for your place of work and your children's school. Make a plan for your family. Know the snow route for the bus you would take.
- Drive only if you have to during winter storms. Make sure your car has antifreeze, a windshield scraper, and proper tires or chains for driving in snow. Have sand or other traction material and a shovel in the car. Keep a flashlight,