

News Release from: City of Salem

SALEM FLOOD RECOVERY: SANDBAG DISPOSAL AND SAFETY CONCERN

Posted: January 31st, 2012 11:50 AM

As water levels recede on the Willamette River and in Salem's creeks, local residents and business owners may wish to dispose of the sandbags placed on their properties. During the flood event, approximately 220,000 sandbags were filled, distributed, or placed in Salem. City officials recommend property owners consider keeping their sandbags in place or stored on their property for several more weeks until the height of the winter rainy season is over.

If property owners wish to dispose of their sandbags now, they can either empty the sand from their sandbags into their lawns and gardens as a soil amendment and place the empty bags into their garbage, or they can return filled sandbags to one of the following locations through February 19, 2012:

- Orchard Heights Park—1165 Orchard Heights Road NW
- Roth's Fresh Market West—1130 Wallace Road NW
- Park and Ride Lot—Wallace Road NW and Brush College Road NW
- Bush's Pasture Park—Lower Leffelle Parking Lot at Capitol Street SE
- Fred Meyer South—3450 Commercial Street SE
- Wal-Mart South—5250 Commercial Street SE
- Lowes Home Improvement—1930 Turner Road SE
- Olinger Pool—1310 A Street NE
- City of Salem Shops Complex—1410 20th Street SE

Signs are posted at each collection location instructing people where to return sandbags. After February 19, 2012, sandbags can be returned only to the City Shops Complex. City Officials stress that sandbags must not be emptied into streets, catch basins, streams, or creeks due to safety and environmental hazards.

The City of Salem does not have the resources to pick up sand and sandbags from individual private properties. Those individuals requiring assistance in disposing of their sandbags should contact Tibby Larson, Volunteer Coordinator at the City of Salem, at 503-589-2197 to arrange for volunteer assistance.

Salem Fire and Police officials warn against people canoeing, kayaking, boating, swimming, or wading in local creeks and in the Willamette River until water levels recede and the velocity, debris load, and temperatures of the water moderate. The Salem Fire Department has recently rescued people who underestimated the dangers currently present in Salem's waterways.

In addition, Salem officials, in conjunction with the State Fire Marshal's Office and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, ask that those who have residences or businesses in areas affected by this winter's storms and flooding secure all containers of chemicals, waste, debris, and other hazardous materials in order to prevent them from entering local waterways. Even a small amount of hazardous material released into the environment can cause significant damage or harm.

Persons having questions about sandbag disposal can receive information by calling Public Works Dispatch Center at 503-588-6333.

Contact Info: Mark Becktel, AICP, Parks and Transportation Services Manager

City of Salem Public Works Department
503-588-6211 or mbecktel@cityofsalem.net

or

Sam Kidd, Stormwater and Wastewater Collections Services Manager
City of Salem Public Works Department
503-589-2156 or skidd@cityofsalem.net