



## **Flood Frequently Asked Questions**

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The following are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about storms, flooding and response protocols.

### **When do you sound the flood horn?**

The protocol is to sound the flood horn when flooding is imminent, which in Ross, is at nineteen (19) feet. When the horn is sounded, residents and merchants are advised to proceed immediately to a higher floor or to higher ground. There is also a protocol with our neighboring Towns Fairfax and San Anselmo, that if they sound their flood horn sirens, Ross will activate our horn as well. This is despite the fact that the flood stage in Fairfax and San Anselmo is much lower than Ross. However, if they are at flood stage there is the possibility Ross will flood as well. The flood horn does not mean to come downtown to see the creek or move merchandise to higher areas. Rising flood waters are fast moving and dangerous.

### **Why can't you sound the flood horn earlier?**

The flood horn is reserved to alert all residents and merchants that flooding is imminent. Many times during a storm the water level hovers around eighteen (18) feet, sometimes for days. Were the flood horn to be sounded each time the creek level gets to eighteen (18) feet, for example, it could be necessary to sound it repeatedly for days, diluting the message and most probably resulting in people ignoring the warning. In this age of technology, we have many other methods of notifying merchants and residents of pending storms and rainfall/creek updates.

### **How is the public notified of pending winter storms and flooding danger?**

Our ability to notify residents and merchants of pending storms and flooding danger has improved exponentially over the last few years, since the last major flood event of 2005. This includes the Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS) (<http://www.alertmarin.org/>) operated by Marin County Office of Emergency Services (OES). Residents are encouraged to sign up for this alert notification system.

In addition, email notifications are sent out to the Town's email list informing residents and merchants of any severe weather advisory's from the National Weather Service ([www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/versprod.php?pil=RR5&sid=RSA](http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/versprod.php?pil=RR5&sid=RSA)).

If you would like to join the Town's email list, please contact the Town Administration office at [llopez@townofross.org](mailto:llopez@townofross.org). We also encourage people to stay tuned to local TV and radio stations (KCBS AM 740, <http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/station/kcbs/>) for weather updates to augment the above information.

**Why can't you establish a hard and fast protocol of exactly what you are going to do and when you are going to do it in a storm situation?**

There is no standard storm event. Each storm is unique as the creek reacts quite differently depending on the rate of rainfall, the ground saturation, the areas receiving the most rainfall, and the duration of the rainfall. Each storm/flooding event is different and calls have to be made for each event based on the available data to ensure an appropriate and timely response.