

British Columbia flooding: Navigating the insurance process



If you still have questions after reading the details below, you can contact IBC's Consumer Information Centre at **1-844-2ask-IBC** (1-844-227-5422) for further information about home, business or car insurance related to the flood.

KNOWING YOUR POLICY

1 Is flood damage covered by insurance?

Many Canadian insurers now offer residential overland flood insurance that, along with sewer backup coverage, helps reduce the financial risk of flooding events. However, these products are optional and must be added-on to home insurance policies. Flood insurance may not be available in some areas that are at high-risk for flooding.

We do know that not every affected resident will have this optional coverage, so it is important to review your policy and speak to your insurance representative to understand your coverage limits.

2 What if I don't have home or flood insurance?

Homeowners without flood insurance, or in circumstances where the existing insurance coverage may not cover their total loss, may qualify for BC's Disaster Financial Assistance program. Visit the government of BC website for more information on eligibility and how to apply.

3 Will I be covered for the spoiled food in my fridge and freezer?

Typically, a homeowner's, condominium owner's or tenant's insurance policy offers a specified coverage limit for loss or damage to food contained in a refrigerator or freezer due to a power interruption. Check with your insurance representative to find out how this coverage could apply to your situation.

4 Will my landlord's policy cover my personal belongings if I do not have tenant's insurance?

No. A landlord insures only the building and landlord-owned appliances. The personal property of tenants is theirs to insure on their own.

5 I rent a unit that has been damaged. Who is responsible to pay for repairing the damage?

The landlord is responsible for ensuring the unit is in a habitable condition. In most cases, the landlord, or the

landlord's insurance company, will pay for repairs to the unit caused by an insured peril.

Tenants are responsible for their belongings. If you have tenant's insurance, read your policy closely to see what kind of damage is covered and call your insurer if you have any questions.

6 I don't know my policy number or insurance company's name. How can I find out?

Call IBC's Consumer Information Centre at **1-844-2ask-IBC (1-844-227-5422)**. If you provide IBC with your name, address and contact information, we can send that to insurance companies and brokers. Once your insurer finds your policy, they will contact you. You will need to sign a consent form to acknowledge that you have given IBC your personal information and that we will not share it or keep it for any other purpose.

ADDITIONAL LIVING EXPENSES: HOW THEY WORK

7 What are additional living expenses?

Additional living expenses are available if your home is damaged or if you are forced to evacuate due to an insured peril. Coverage for overland flood is optional, therefore your additional living expenses may not apply unless you have purchased this optional overland flood coverage.

8 What do additional living expenses cover?

Additional living expenses coverage pays for anything over and above your normal expenses. This would include reasonable expenses like food, hotel or rental home charges, and other costs you would not normally face while living in your own home. Speak with your insurance representative, who is prepared to clarify the details of your policies, and provide answers specific to your coverage.

TIPS FOR STARTING THE CLAIMS PROCESS

When it is safe, take these steps to begin the insurance claims process:

- Assess the damage and document it by keeping detailed notes. Taking photos can be helpful.
- Call your insurance representative or your insurer's claims department to report damage.
- If possible, assemble proofs of purchase, photos, receipts and warranties. Keep damaged items unless they pose a health hazard.
- Ask your insurance representative whether you are entitled to additional living expenses and for what period of time.
- Keep all of the receipts related to cleanup. If you've been displaced, keep the receipts for your additional living expenses.

YOU'VE FILED A CLAIM. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Once you have reported a loss, you will be assigned a claims adjuster by your insurance company. Given the number of people affected by the flooding, it may take some time, but you will be contacted.
- The claims adjuster will investigate the circumstances of the loss, examine the documents you provide and explain the claims process. Take notes and ask questions during these conversations.
- Your insurance company will ask you to complete a Proof of Loss form to list the property and/or items that have been damaged or destroyed, with the corresponding value or cost of the damage or loss. You must sign and swear that the statements you make in the Proof of Loss form are true. Ask your insurance representative or claims adjuster to clarify anything you are unsure about.

Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) is here to answer any insurance-related questions you have.

For more information, visit www.ibt.ca/bc, phone 1-844-2ask-IBC (1-844-227-5422) or email AskIBWest@ibt.ca. You can also follow IBC at @insurancebureau on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

If you do not know who your insurer is, please contact your insurance representative or IBC.