

Dam Safety is a Shared Responsibility

Dams provide many valuable functions including water supply, irrigation, recreation, hydropower, fish and wildlife habitat, and flood reduction systems, but if they fail, flooding can be catastrophic.

KNOW YOUR RISK

- As of 2018, there are more than 90,000 dams in the United States. Approximately one-third of these pose a “high” or “significant” hazard to life and property if failure occurs.
- As the numbers of buildings, businesses and people increase near a dam, so can its classification (low, significant or high) because it was not built to protect the current population and traffic.
- Smaller agricultural dams in your area may now be considered high or significant hazard dams due to recent development and failure could cause death or injury.
- Many dams are nearing their designed life span of up to 100 years. Proper maintenance is important to ensure the longest life span possible.
- To find out if you live in a dam breach inundation zone, contact your local emergency management agency or DCR Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management.

KNOW YOUR ROLE AND THE ROLE OF DAM OWNERS

- Know the dams in your area where you live and work.
- Be aware of potential maintenance issues and report them to owners and authorities immediately.
- Dam owners should work with the federal or state regulator to comply with safety standards.
- Dam owners have the responsibility to maintain their dams and to have an Emergency Action Plan on file with local and state authorities.

TAKE ACTION

- Inform your friends and neighbors about the benefits and risks associated with dams.
- Know your evacuation routes.
- Maintain flood insurance if you live near or below a dam.
- Have a plan in place for your family or business should you need to evacuate quickly due to a dam failure upstream.



RESOURCES

- DCR Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management (www.dcr.virginia.gov/dam-safety-and-floodplains)
- Association of State Dam Safety Officials (www.damsafety.org)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Dam Safety (www.fema.gov/national-dam-safety-program-information)

**Division of Dam Safety
and Floodplain Management**
804-371-6095 | dam@dcr.virginia.gov