

Virginia Flood Awareness Week 2020

Twitter Chat Planning Guide



Background

Flooding is the most common and costly natural disaster, but only 3% of Virginians have flood insurance. It is estimated that 1 inch of water in a home can cause upwards of \$25,000 in damages. Anywhere it can rain, it can flood. Most homeowners and renters insurance policies don't cover flooding, so it's important to act now. [Virginia Flood Awareness Week](#), March 8-14, 2020, encourages people in Virginia and beyond to learn about their flood risk and protect the life they've built with flood insurance.

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), with FEMA Region III, is hosting a Twitter Chat with community leaders, subject matter experts, and individuals to offer information to the public to increase flood awareness so you can know your risk, protect your property, and get flood insurance.

The Twitter Chat is an opportunity to:

- Give citizens the tools they need to identify their flood risk
- Promote the purchase of flood insurance, so homeowners, renters, and businesses can recover faster and more completely
- Encourage citizens to be flood aware: know the warnings, be prepared, and stay safe

Twitter Chat Logistics

- **Date:** March 11, 2020
- **Time:** 1:00PM – 2:15PM Eastern Time
12:00PM Central | 11:00AM Mountain | 10:00AM Pacific
- **Location:** Online via Twitter
- **Moderator:** @VirginiaDCR
- **Hashtag:** #FloodAwareChat

Target Audiences

- Insurance agents
- Realtors
- Financial planners
- Public safety
- State & local floodplain managers
- State & local emergency managers
- Building & land use experts
- Water resource experts
- Individuals & families

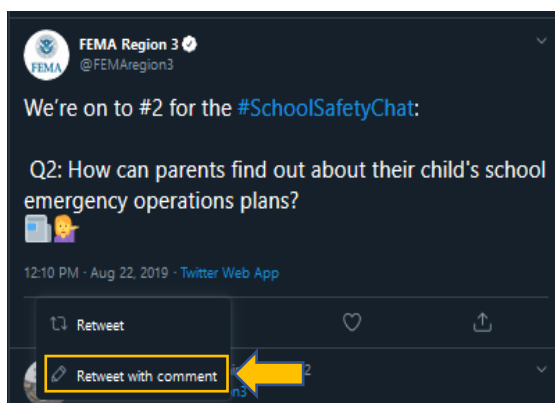
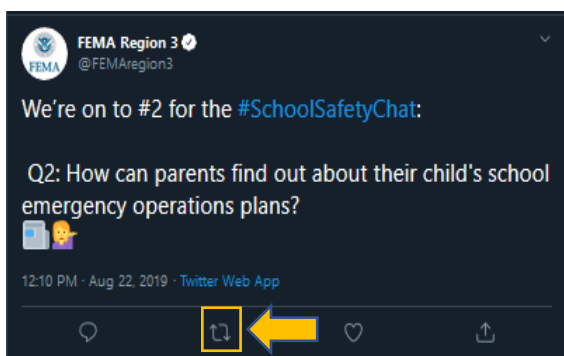
First Time to a Twitter Chat?

It's easy. To participate, all you need to do is tweet during the designated time using the conversation hashtag. [@VirginiaDCR](#) handle will moderate the conversation between participants. For a list of questions, timing, and example answers, turn to page 4. We encourage participants to answer from their perspective experience, and use the example answers as guidance to begin your response. To answer a question, just begin your tweet with the answer to the numbered question (A1, A2, etc.). Feel free to customize your responses, add graphics, and include your take! Located in Virginia? Add the [#FloodAwareVA](#) hashtag to your answers, so Virginians can see your answers with the other Flood Awareness Week posts.

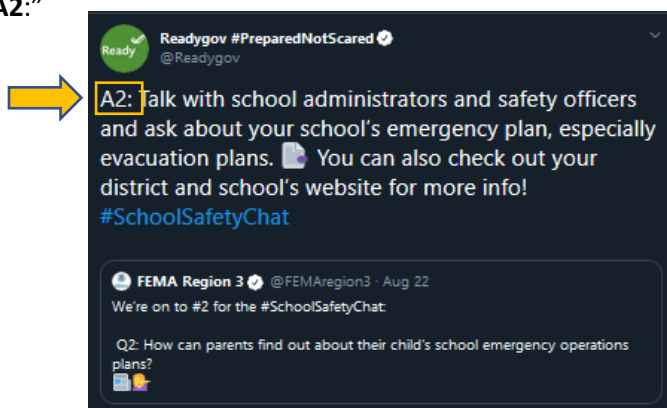
Step-by-Step Instructions on how to Participate in the Twitter Chat

To answer a question, watch for questions coming from Virginia DCR's account. When you see the Twitter post with the question, click the retweet button on a Virginia DCR question and choose the "retweet with comment" option.

Below is an example from a previous Twitter chat by FEMA Region 3. In this example, at 12:10 PM, FEMA Region 3 posed the question "Q2: How can parents find out about their child's school emergency operations plans?" The visuals below show you where you can find the retweet button and "retweet with comment" option to start your tweet.



Begin your tweet with the Answer to the numbered question. For example, this was **Q2**. If you answer Q2, you would start your answer using "**A2:**"



Please use the hashtag [#FloodAwareChat](#) for your answers, so others can follow the conversation. Feel free to customize your responses with images, graphics, emojis, or relevant gifs. During the chat, you can keep up with the [#FloodAwareChat](#) hashtag to see what other accounts are tweeting and avoid duplicating responses.

Sample Emojis

Simply copy and paste the emoji into your tweet if you choose to use one.

💧 Water	🌊 Wave	☁️ 🌧️ Rain	🌀 Hurricane
🌬️ Wind	☁️ ❄️ Snow	✅ Yes/Do	❌ No/Don't
🚒 🚓 🚑 Public Safety	🚤 Boat/Rescue	🚗 🚘 🚙 Car	🗺️ Map
📅 Calendar	📺 TV	📻 Radio	📞 📱 Phone
🏠 House	🏠 Damaged House	🏢 Business	💰 Money
⚠️ 🔊 Alert	🔦 Flashlight	🔧 Tools	🌳 Tree/Conservation
🏭 Factory	⚠️ Unsafe Water	🍲 Food	🐍 Snake/Wildlife

Messages you can use to Promote #FloodAwareChat

- Flooding doesn't only occur near a river or coastline - anywhere it can rain, it can flood. Join the [#FloodAwareChat](#) on 3/11 and learn about flood risk and flood insurance!
- Just 1 inch of water can cause more than \$25,000 of damage to your home. Are you covered with flood insurance? Join the [#FloodAwareChat](#) on 3/11 to learn more!
- Learn more about how you can protect your home or business from floods by joining our [#FloodAwareChat](#) on 3/11!
- Floods are the nation's most common and costly natural disaster. Learn more about flood risk and how you can protect yourself by joining our [#FloodAwareChat](#) on 3/11!
- Do you know the difference between a flood warning, flood watch, or flood advisory? Join the [#FloodAwareChat](#) on 3/11 and learn how you can protect yourself and property from floods!

Questions and RSVPs

Please contact the Virginia DCR team if you have any questions. Feel free to share this with other relevant partners and stakeholders.

Virginia DCR Contacts			
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If you can RSVP in advance, we would really appreciate it! Please contact any of the DCR team before March 11th to let us know you are planning to participate.

Twitter Chat Timeline and Example Answers

1:00pm EST

- Welcome chat participants and ask them to introduce themselves in the comments section of the post.

1:05pm EST

- **Q1: What kind of flood risks are in your community? Who is at risk? #FloodAwareChat**
 - *Example answers:*
 - A1: My community experiences coastal and riverine flooding. Everyone is at risk, because anywhere it can rain, it can flood. #FloodAwareChat
 - A1: My community experiences flash flooding. People living near the river and in low lying areas are at the greatest risk. #FloodAwareChat
 - A1: My community has a dam designed to protect against flood. Dams can be overtopped or fail when put under extreme pressure by large amounts of water. People living downstream are at risk. #FloodAwareChat
 - *Example answers for Virginia participants:*
 - A1: Shockoe Bottom in Richmond is protected by the flood wall but can still experience flooding from rain events. Residents and business owner should be protected with flood insurance. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA
 - A1: [STREET NAME] may flood during light rain or high tide. Residents & visitors should be aware that vehicles could be at risk, and traffic patterns may change during flooding. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA

1:10pm EST

- **Q2: What tools/resources are available to identify a property's flood risk? #FloodAwareChat**
 - *Example answers:*
 - A2: Flood Insurance Rate Map information, letters of map change, and GIS data can be downloaded from FEMA's Map Service Center. #FloodAwareChat <http://msc.fema.gov/>
 - A2: Visit [COMMUNITY NAME]'s local GIS map to find out if your property is in a flood zone. #FloodAwareChat
 - *Example answers for Virginia participants:*
 - A2: The Virginia Flood Risk Information System can be used to find out if a property is located in a FEMA flood zone. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/dam-safety-and-floodplains/fpvfris.php>
 - A2: The Virginia Dam Safety Inventory System lets users access info on all dams in VA. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/dam-safety-and-floodplains/ds-dsis>
 - A2 Live in coastal VA? Know if you live in a hurricane evacuation zone and how to be prepared. Hurricane season starts June 1! #FloodAwareChat #KnowYourZone #FloodAwareVA <https://www.vaemergency.gov/hurricane-evacuation-zone-lookup/>
 - A2: In coastal VA? Use @VIMS_News Tidewatch to help prepare for coastal flooding. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA
 - A2: The City of Franklin has flood inundation mapping so you can learn when flooding will start to happen and where. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA <https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/inundation/index.php?gage=fklv2>

1:15pm EST

- **Q3: Did you know there are different emergency alerts for floods? What are they?**
#FloodAwareChat
 - *Example answers:*
 - A3: @NWS issues alerts for flooding. Warnings mean to take action. Watches mean to be prepared. Advisories mean to be aware. #FloodAwareChat
<https://www.weather.gov/safety/flood-watch-warning>
 - A3: Flash floods can happen suddenly. A watch means flooding is possible, so you should be prepared. A warning means flooding is happening and you need to get to higher ground immediately. #FloodAwareChat
 - A3: A flood watch means flooding is possible. Stay alert and get prepared in case flooding does occur. #FloodAwareChat
 - A3: A flood warning means flooding is happening or about to. #FloodAwareChat
 - A3: Evacuation alerts may be given due to flooding. Always evacuate immediately. #FloodAwareChat

The National Weather Service has graphics available that explain the different flood alerts that could be used in place of some of the example answers above:

<https://www.weather.gov/wrn/spring2017-flood-sm#sp4>

1:25pm EST

- **Q4: What systems/tools provide emergency alert notifications in your community?**
#FloodAwareChat
 - *Example answers:*
 - A4: Get real-time text or email alerts when nearby stream gages hit certain levels using @USGS WaterAlert. #FloodAwareChat
<https://maps.waterdata.usgs.gov/mapper/wateralert/>
 - A4: Local TV and radio stations provide weather alerts. #FloodAwareChat
 - A4: @NWS sends text messages for severe weather alerts. #FloodAwareChat
 - *Example answers for Virginia participants:*
 - A4: [COMMUNITY NAME] has a text alert system to warn citizens of flood events. Sign up today! #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA [INSERT LINK]
 - A4: Be prepared before you go. Follow @VaDOT or visit 511 Virginia for traffic alerts and road closures. #FloodAwareChat @FloodAwareVA
<https://www.511virginia.org/>

1:30pm EST

- **Q5: Flood waters can be dangerous. Did you know six inches of water can knock a person off their feet? What other ways are floodwaters unsafe?** #FloodAwareChat
 - *Example answers:*
 - A5: Never drive through floodwaters. It only takes 6 inches of water to stall out most vehicles, and the road may be washed out under the water.
#FloodAwareChat #TurnAroundDontDrown
 - A5: One foot of water can float a small car. Never drive through floodwaters.
#FloodAwareChat #TurnAroundDontDrown
 - A5: Most vehicles will be carried away in only 2 feet of rushing water. Never drive through floodwaters. #FloodAwareChat #TurnAroundDontDrown

- A5: Floodwaters can transport debris and other dangerous materials that you may not be able to see. Don't walk through floodwaters. #FloodAwareChat
- A5: Floodwaters can carry sewage, bacteria, and other pollutants that can make you sick. Avoid floodwaters, throw out any flooded food, and wash with soap and water if you do encounter floodwaters. #FloodAwareChat
- A5: Downed power lines may be in floodwaters. Stay safe, avoid floodwaters. #FloodAwareChat
- *Example answers for Virginia participants:*
 - A5: Floods can displace wildlife, like snakes or alligators, to areas they're not usually seen. Be prepared and know who to call if you encounter wildlife after a flood. @VDGIF #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA
 - A5: Wells can be flooded, contaminating drinking and/or processing water. If your well has been flooded, contact @VDHgov to confirm your water is contaminate free. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA
 - A5: Floods can result in large amounts of debris. Make sure your community has a debris management plan and is prepared. @VirginiaDEQ #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA

The National Weather Service has flood safety graphics available that could be used in place of some of the example answers above: <https://www.weather.gov/wrn/spring2017-flood-sm#sp4>

1:40pm EST

- **Q6: Why is it important to have flood insurance?** #FloodAwareChat
 - *Example answers:*
 - A6: Most homeowners and renters insurance policies do not cover flood damages. #FloodAwareChat
 - A6: Flood insurance offers peace of mind that you can recover after a flood. Protect the life you've built. #FloodAwareChat
 - A6: Federal disaster assistance is not available for all flood events and is not designed to restore your home or replace your belongings. Flood insurance can, even without a disaster declaration. #FloodAwareChat
 - A6: After Hurricane Harvey, the average disaster assistance payment was \$4,000 vs. the average flood insurance payment of \$110,000. Protect your property. Get flood insurance. #FloodAwareChat
 - *Example answer for Virginia participants:*
 - A6: After Hurricane Matthew, the average flood insurance payment was \$35,000 vs. the average disaster assistance payment of \$4,000. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA
 - A6: During Hurricane Matthew, 70% of damaged structures were outside of high risk flood zones. Anywhere it can rain, it can flood. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA

1:45pm EST

- **Q7: Who is eligible to purchase flood insurance?** #FloodAwareChat
 - *Example answers:*
 - A7: Anyone living in an NFIP participating community is eligible for flood insurance. #FloodAwareChat

- A7: People who live in a mapped flood zone AND people who don't live in a mapped flood zone are eligible to purchase flood insurance. #FloodAwareChat
- A7: Homeowners and renters can purchase flood insurance. #FloodAwareChat
- A7: Businesses can purchase flood insurance. #FloodAwareChat
- A7: Private flood insurance policies may be available to residents living in non-NFIP participating communities. #FloodAwareChat
- *Example answers for Virginia participants:*
 - A7: [COMMUNITY NAME] participates in the National Flood Insurance Program, so that ALL of our residents are eligible for flood insurance. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA

1:50pm EST

- **Q8: Aside from purchasing flood insurance, what are other ways people can mitigate flood risk on their property?** #FloodAwareChat
 - *Example answers:*
 - A8: Installing a rain barrel may reduce runoff and localized flooding on your property. #FloodAwareChat
 - A8: Regularly clean out your gutters and downspouts to make sure rainwater drains away from your home properly. #FloodAwareChat
 - A8: Do you have flood vents in your crawlspace? Make sure they're clear of debris, not blocked off, and functioning properly. #FloodAwareChat
 - A8: Do you have a crawlspace? Install flood vents to allow floodwaters to automatically flow in/out to protect your foundation. #FloodAwareChat
 - A8: Check out @FEMAregion3 low cost projects you can do to protect your home from flooding. #FloodAwareChat https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1528734155205-5dba7257256260a5785db8bf7a63243e/Protect_Your_Home_From_Flooding_Brochure.pdf
 - *Example answers for Virginia participants:*
 - A8: Elevating your home can reduce your flood risk. [COMMUNITY NAME] may be able to help cover this cost with mitigation grants. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA [INSERT LINK OR CONTACT INFO]
 - A8: Hazard mitigation grants may be available to mitigate flood risk to your home or community. Learn more @VDEM #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA <https://www.vaemergency.gov/grants/hazard-mitigation-assistance-grant-programs/>

2:00pm EST

- **Q9: What resources are available for people to learn more about flood insurance?** #FloodAwareChat
 - *Example answers:*
 - A9: Visit FloodSmart.gov to learn more about flood insurance. #FloodAwareChat <https://www.floodsmart.gov/>
 - A9: FEMA has resources available for insurance agents to learn more about flood insurance. #FloodAwareChat <https://agents.floodsmart.gov/>
 - *Example answers for Virginia participants:*

- A9: [INSURANCE COMPANY NAME] sells flood insurance policies in [COMMUNITY NAME]. Talk to an agent today, and make sure you're covered. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA

A list of FEMA publications related to flood insurance is available on DCR's website. You may want to link to one of these documents as part of your answer, or they may give you ideas for different answers. <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/dam-safety-and-floodplains/floodawareness-publications>

FEMA has social media graphics available that you may want to use to support for answers related to the flood insurance questions above. <https://agents.floodsmart.gov/Resource-Library>

2:05pm EST

- **Q10: Do you have anything else you'd like to share about flood risk, flood awareness, or flood insurance?** #FloodAwareChat
 - *Example answers:*
 - A10: Preferred Risk Policies for properties outside of high risk flood zones can be purchased for as little as \$325 a year! #FloodAwareChat
 - A10: Flood insurance policies take 30 days to go into effect. Don't wait until the flood comes. Be prepared, so you can protect the life you've built. #FloodAwareChat
 - A10: Learn more about what to do before, during, and after a flood. #FloodAwareChat <https://www.ready.gov/floods>
 - A10: The @RedCross has information available to help you prepare for a flood. #FloodAwareChat <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/flood.html>
 - *Example answers for Virginia participants:*
 - A10: [COMMUNITY NAME] participates in the Community Rating System, so residents can get a [CRS % Discount] discount on NFIP flood insurance policies. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA
 - A10: Use the @VDEM Flood Safety guide to help you prepare for a flood. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA <https://www.vaemergency.gov/threats/floods/>
 - A10: Hurricanes impact coastal AND inland communities in VA. Use the @VDEM Hurricane Preparedness guide to learn more about hurricanes about how to be prepared. #FloodAwareChat #FloodAwareVA <https://www.vaemergency.gov/threats/hurricanes/>

2:15pm EST

- **Close the Twitter chat and thank participants.**