

IBC urges Albertans to stay safe and protect their belongings:

Get in touch with insurance company or IBC to get answers about coverage

EDMONTON – June 20, 2013 – With reports of heavy rainfall and overland flooding in several southern Alberta communities, Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) reminds homeowners to take measures to protect themselves and their belongings. IBC's Consumer Information Centre in Alberta, **1-800-377-6378** is available to answer any insurance questions consumers may have.

"First and foremost, we encourage all individuals in danger of flooding to take the proper measures to protect themselves and their loved ones," said Bill Adams, VP, Western and Pacific Region, Insurance Bureau of Canada. "In addition, we urge homeowners to take preventative action to minimize their losses."

He added: "It's important to take preventative action against flooding because damage caused by overland flooding is not covered by home insurance policies anywhere in Canada."

The purpose of insurance is to spread risk amongst many policyholders. But overland flooding is a risk for only a small percentage of the population – that is, those who live in a flood plain or close to rivers or lakes. Since most homeowners are not exposed to the risk, they would not share in the cost to be protected against the risk and, consequently providing flood insurance would be unaffordable for the homeowners who might need it.

Adams added: "However, some damage may be the result of sewer back-up. Coverage for this type of damage is available, but must be purchased as an add-on to a home insurance policy."

IBC offers tips for protecting belongings, and information about insurance for water damage.

IBC recommends these helpful tips to protect your home:

- Move valuable items from the basement to upper floors. Do not stack wet items on dry items just to get them off the floor.
- Dry the flooded area within a few days to prevent mould growth. Industrial-sized air dryers are often used in these instances and are typically available for purchase or rent at one of the major hardware stores.
- If the water is from a freshwater source, quickly retrieve from the flooded area any valuables. If the flood source originates from the septic system, avoid contact with the water and do not cross-contaminate unaffected areas by walking in and out of the contaminated areas.



Insurance coverage

- Sudden and accidental bursting of plumbing pipes and appliances is covered by home insurance policies. However, damage may not be covered when freezing causes the escape of water.
- Water damage in a basement due to a sewer backup is only covered if specific sewer backup coverage has been purchased.
- In certain circumstances, homeowners who are unable to return home due to insurable damage are entitled to additional living expenses (this coverage is not available if an evacuation happened due to overland flooding).
- Damage to vehicles from water is usually covered on an auto insurance policy if comprehensive or all perils coverage has been purchased. This coverage is not mandatory, so check your policy.
- Overland flooding resulting in water overflowing onto dry land and causing damage is not covered in home insurance policies in Canada. (Speak to your insurance representative for more information on how you can protect your home).

Consumers looking for answers on these issues or requiring assistance with their insurance questions, please call our Consumer Information Centre at 1-800-377-6378.

For more information on protecting yourself from severe weather visit ibc.ca

About Insurance Bureau of Canada

Insurance Bureau of Canada is the national industry association representing Canada's private home, car and business insurers. Its member companies represent approximately 90% of the private property and casualty insurance market in Canada. The P&C insurance industry employs 118,600 Canadians, pays more than \$7 billion in taxes to the federal, provincial and municipal governments, and has a total premium base of \$46 billion.

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If you require more information, IBC spokespeople are available to discuss the details in this media release.

To schedule an interview, please contact:

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