

DIY Sandbagging

This information is provided as a self-help guide to assist you in protecting your property from flooding until additional help arrives. In the case of Flash Flooding, the water will rise very quickly and will also drop quickly. The faster you can stop or divert the water flow, the less chance of damage occurring to your property.

Sandbags placed in appropriate locations around your home or business can reduce the impact of flooding. Sandbags will not stop the water completely, but can reduce the amount of water entering.

Filling Sandbags

Filling sandbags requires two or three people.

Only fill the bags half to two-thirds full. For transportation, tie off the bags with cable, wire ties, or the string fitted to some sandbags.

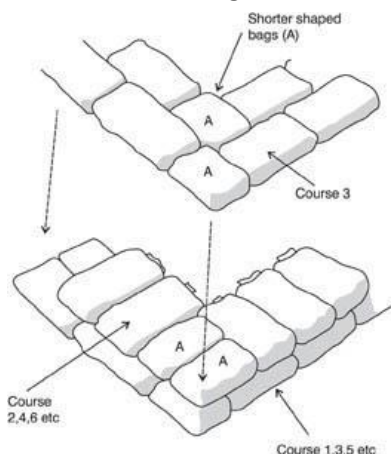
Laying Sandbags

Lay the bags in horizontal courses like bricks.

1. Place down a layer of plastic sheeting to act as the water proofing membrane
2. Lay sandbags like brickwork on top of the plastic sheeting
3. Lay the bags with the necks untied and flattened out under the sandbag next to it - this helps keep the bags together
4. Lay bags with necks and side seams on the inner face of the wall, as the necks and side seams tend to burst
5. Flattening down the sandbag row before adding the next row will help you to build a better structure
6. Start at one end and work to the other end
7. Tuck flap under the bag at the end of the row
8. Stagger rows so that the joins do not line up

In the absence of regular sandbags, use plastic garbage bags, grocery bags, pillow slips or grain bags. Consider the weight versus strength when handling filled plastic bags. Garden soil, gravel or similar could be used as a substitute to sand in an emergency.

A method of forming a corner in a sandbag wall is shown below.



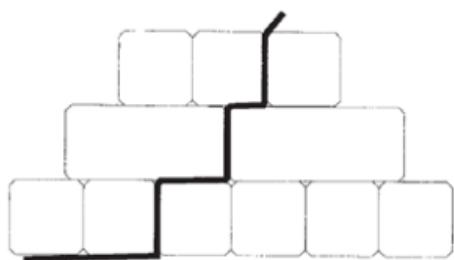
Key Points to Remember

- The face must have a slope, with the base of the wall set on firm ground
- The ratio of wall height to depth must be 4:1
- The recommended maximum height for a sandbag wall is 1.5 metres
- Sandbag walls should be keyed into the ground for maximum strength, which is achieved by digging a trench along the line of the wall to the depth of one sandbag and the width of two sandbags
- Sandbags should be approximately 1/2 to 2/3 full, with the necks tied for transport only



Waterproofing

Sandbag walls are not waterproof. Laying plastic sheeting under the sandbags can help with waterproofing but threading plastic sheeting through the layers, as shown below, will add even more protection.



Location of Plastic Waterproofing Sheet

Avoid placing plastic sheeting solely on the outside wall in the direction of the water.

If you are using dry sand, the sandbags will not easily mould or conform to the desired shape. If the plastic sheeting is placed within the sandbag wall, the outer surface bags become moist and conform to the other sandbags in the wall, filling small crevices.

Where do I place the sandbags?

- Cover drainage holes e.g. toilet, shower, bath and floor drains to stop backflow of contaminated water.
- Place a small sandbag wall across doorways. The number of layers required will be dependent on the expected flood height; however it is generally around two (2) sandbag rows high.
- Make sure that you have at least one doorway that you can use to access or exit the building – do this by building a wall that allows the door to still be opened.
- Air vents between brickwork may also require sandbags. Small vents may be covered with waterproof tape or plastic.
- Protect air vents or drains with sandbags or tape. To avoid back flow of grey water block toilets with a small plastic bag of sand, weighed down by a larger sandbag.

