Be Flood Ready

The very strong El Niño raises the odds for higher tides and potentially more rains this winter.

Be ready: Make a plan, build a kit, know your sandbag sites, and sign up for SMC Alerts.

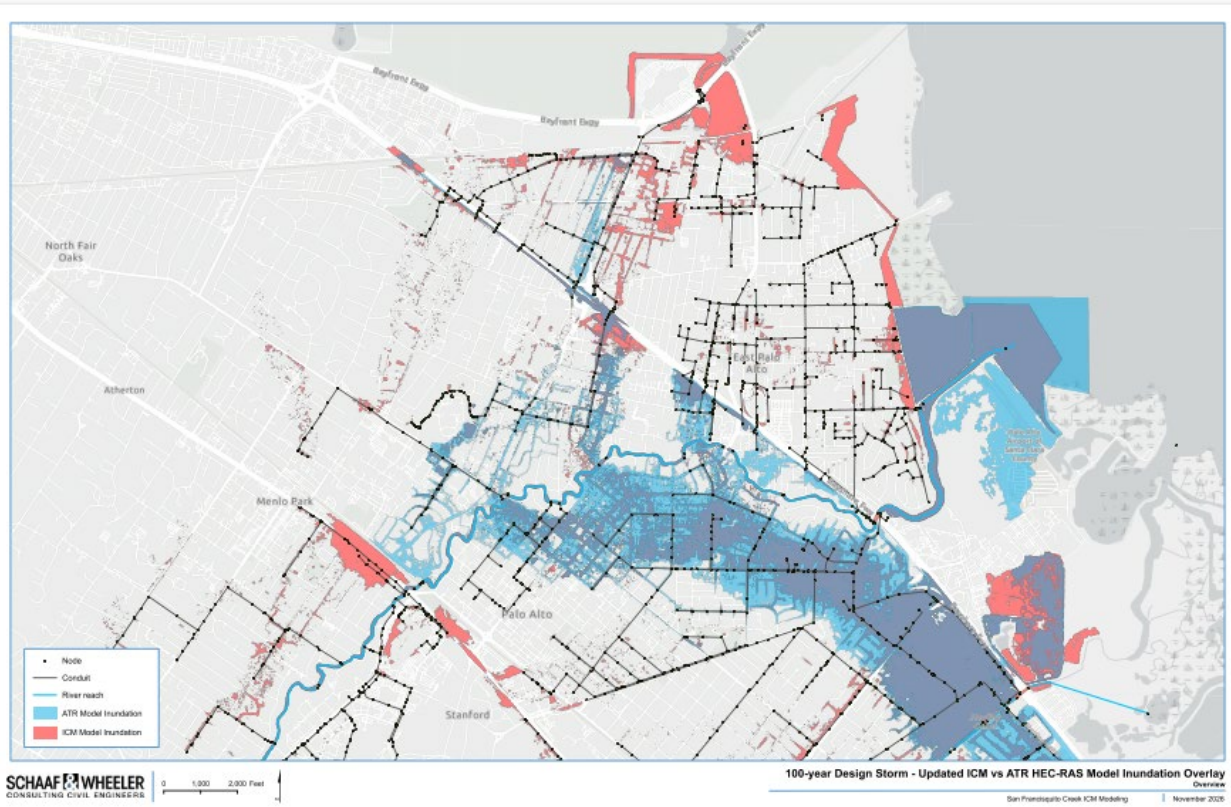


Register for emergency alerts

You can sign up for alerts that are targeted to your area: https://www.smcgov.org/dem/smc-alert

Know your flood risk

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has maps of Special Flood Hazard Areas by address: https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search

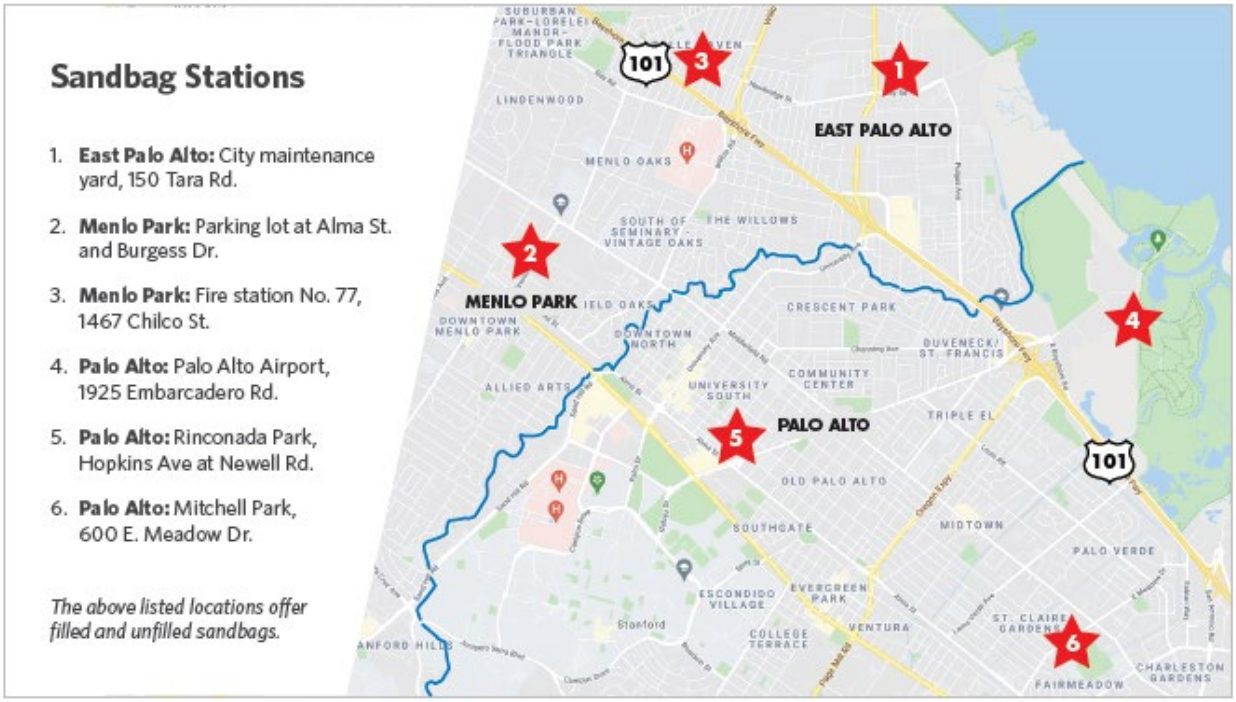


This map shows the areas that could still flood during a 100-year storm, despite the beneficial effects of city storm drains.

Find free sandbag locations

Sandbags are first come first served – but only take what you need. Make sure that you know how to properly fill and stack the sandbags.

Duct tape has been shown to be cheaper and more effective than sandbags, but you will not be able to open your door until flood threat is over!



https://www.sfcjpa.org/sandbag-location-map

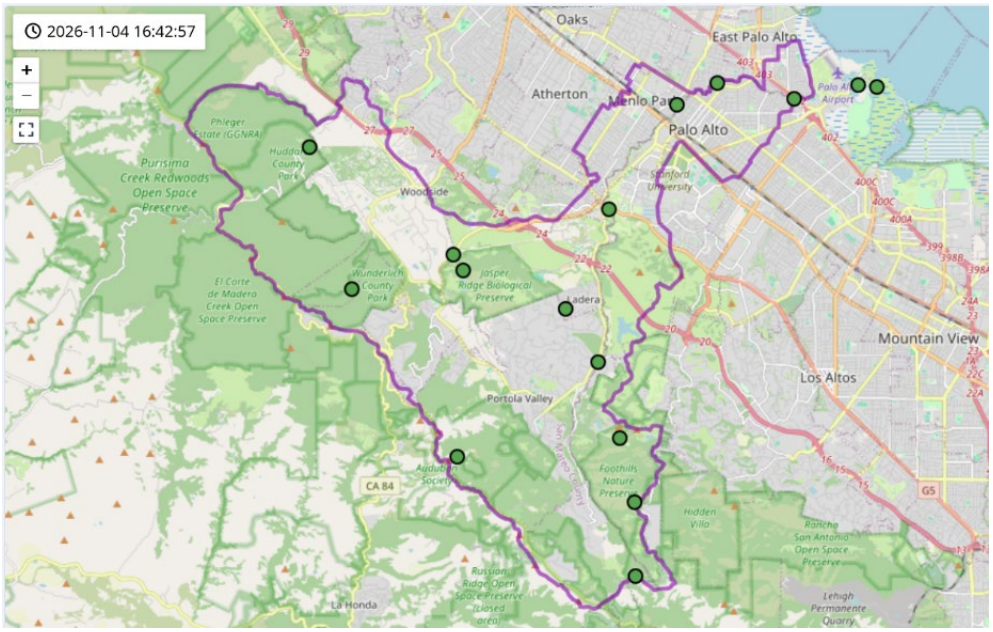
Learn how to monitor water levels in San Francisquito Creek

Rain and stream gage monitors are located in the watershed. Data is automatically sent to our members so that we are coordinated.

We are lucky to have the San Francisquito Creek Multi-Agency Coordination (SFC MAC) to allow for sharing of resources, emergency response. The SFC MAC has Subject Matter Experts that review the data and evaluate flood levels.

Learn more: https://www.sfcjpa.org/rain-and-streamflow-gages-winter-readiness





Rain gage monitor locations in the San Francisquito Creek watershed.

Did you know that San Francisquito Creek currently overtops its banks at an approximate 25-year storm event?

With climate change, Stanford University predicts that storms will have greater intensity and that higher intensity storm events will occur at more frequent intervals.

Flood Trigger Levels for San Francisquito Creek:

Levels	Definition	USGS Gage Trigger cubic feet per second	Pope Chaucer Bridge Trigger (Stage, feet)
Preparation	Get ready for floods, have a plan, know evacuation routes *before* rainy season	NA	NA
Monitoring	Flood risk is low, staff are actively monitoring. This stage is communicated with those on the alert list for SMC or SCC when a major storm event is predicted with high rain levels	<3000 CFS	13ft +
Flood Watch	Flood risk is low to moderate, SMEs are communicating and may call a meeting to discuss	*3000 CFS*	15ft+
Flood Warning	Flooding is likely to occur soon.	4900 CFS	19+
Voluntary Evacuation	Flooding is imminent or already occurring.	5400 CFS	>20

Know your duties as a creekside property owner

Every property owner has a duty to maintain his or her property in a reasonably safe condition that does not interfere with a neighbor's ability to enjoy their property. Maintenance duties may include vegetation management, erosion repair, and removal of graffiti, trash, debris, encampments and fallen trees. A property owner is not required to enlarge or increase the capacity of a creek for flood protection purposes. Some activities are subject to permitting by local, state and federal regulatory agencies prior to performing the work.

Some private landowners along San Francisquito Creek own the creek banks and sometimes the creek area itself. As stewards of these creekside properties in San Mateo County, the landowner is responsible for managing their respective lands, including those in and along the San Francisquito Creek.

Resources and More Information

A partial list of resources:

- https://www.sfcjpa.org/rain-and-streamflow-gages-winter-readiness
- https://www.oneshoreline.org/flood-preparedness
- https://www.menlopark.gov/Government/Departments/City-Managers-Office/Emergency-Disaster-Preparedness/Storms-and-flooding
- https://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/publicworks/page/storm-and-flood-protection-preparation

To report creek or tidal flooding, blocked storm drains, fallen trees, or other storm-related hazards in your city:

East Palo Alto: 650-321-1112
https://www.cityofepa.org/publicworks/page/storm-and-flood-protection-preparation

Menlo Park: Report non-emergency issues through ACT: menlopark.gov/Services/ACT-Menlo-Park
Public Works Main phone number: 650-330-6740
After hours and weekends, call the police non-emergency line: 650-330-6300
Learn more: menlopark.gov/storms