Nuisance Flood Events Are Significantly Increasing Around the U.S.

What is nuisance flooding?

Flooding which causes public inconvenience.

What are the impacts of nuisance flooding?

Frequent road closures, overwhelmed storm drains, and deterioration of infrastructure such as roads and rail.

Where is this happening?

Nuisance flooding is increasing around the coastal U.S., with more rapid acceleration along the East and Gulf Coasts.

Why is this happening?

Nuisance flooding is increasing due to climate-related sea level rise and land subsidence (sinking) combined with loss of natural coastal barriers.

Top Ten Locations of Frequent Nuisance Flooding in the U.S.

Annapolis, MD Port Isabel, TX
Baltimore, MD Charleston, SC
Atlantic City, NJ Washington, DC
Philadelphia, PA San Francisco, CA
Sandy Hook, NJ Norfolk, VA



Nuisance Flooding—

Storm Surge

1950 sea level

In 1950 it would take a considerable amount of water caused by a large storm such as a hurricane to cause nuisance flooding. Nuisance flooding was infrequent.

High Tide 2010 sea level

In 2010, with higher relative sea level, it no longer takes a strong storm or hurricane to cause flooding. Now, nuisance flooding is frequent and can be caused merely by high tide.

How is local elevation important to nuisance flooding?

The relationship between local elevation and the high tide line determines the rate of nuisance flooding. If they are close to the same in elevation, flooding is frequent. If they are not close, flooding is infrequent.

