# Dam Safety is a Shared Responsibility

Dams provide many valuable functions including water supply, irrigation, recreation, hydropower, fish and wildlife habitat, and flood reduction systems, but if they fail, flooding can be catastrophic.

## **KNOW YOUR RISK**

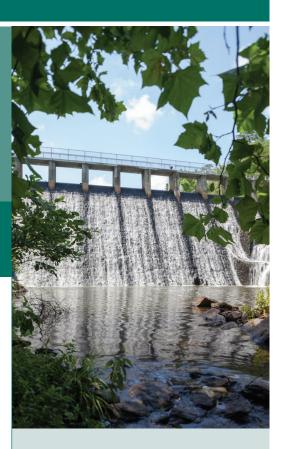
- As of 2018, there are more than 90,000 dams in the United States.
  Approximately one-third of these pose a "high" or "significant" hazard to life and property if failure occurs.
- As the numbers of buildings, businesses and people increase near a dam, so can its classification (low, significant or high) because it was not built to protect the current population and traffic.
- Smaller agricultural dams in your area may now be considered high or significant hazard dams due to recent development and failure could cause death or injury.
- Many dams are nearing their designed life span of up to 100 years.
  Proper maintenance is important to ensure the longest life span possible.
- To find out if you live in a dam breach inundation zone, contact your local emergency management agency or DCR Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management.

# KNOW YOUR ROLE AND THE ROLE OF DAM OWNERS

- Know the dams in your area where you live and work.
- Be aware of potential maintenance issues and report them to owners and authorities immediately.
- Dam owners should work with the federal or state regulator to comply with safety standards.
- Dam owners have the responsibility to maintain their dams and to have an Emergency Action Plan on file with local and state authorities.

# **TAKE ACTION**

- Inform your friends and neighbors about the benefits and risks associated with dams.
- · Know your evacuation routes.
- Maintain flood insurance if you live near or below a dam.
- Have a plan in place for your family or business should you need to evacuate quickly due to a dam failure upstream.



### **RESOURCES**

- DCR Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management (www. dcr.virginia.gov/dam-safety-and floodplains)
- Association of State Dam Safety Officials (www.damsafety.org)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Dam Safety (www.fema. gov/national-dam-safety-programinformation)

**Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management** 804-371-6095 | dam@dcr.virginia.gov

