Sandbagging 101

Sandbagging is a seasonal ritual in flood-prone cities and towns. In places like Fargo, N.D., up to 3 million bags are filled, readied and made into levees according to methods developed for saving lives, homes and property. Here's a look at how it's done.

S A N D B A G S Most sandbags are made of woven polypropylene and are 14 inches wide and perhaps 2 feet deep. They're usually filled about halfway with sand or clay and tied or stapled. They weigh about 35 pounds.



2 FILLING BAGS

It usually takes two people to fill one sandbag. Crews often use funnels (like the one shown), but mass production sometimes involves conveyors and chutes.



3 SITE PREP

Site preparation begins with scraping away ice, snow and topsoil, if possible. A shallow trench sometimes helps hold the levee in place.

