



Damage to the city was estimated to be about 200 million dollars, which would be close to 40 billion dollars in today's currency. The only bright side to the destruction was that, "*federal relief was requisitioned at Washington to eliminate the danger of future 'floods.'*" Considering the country was still in the mist of the Depression, the government acted swiftly to help the area. The Works Project Administration [WPA] hired local unemployed men and women to shovel mud off the streets and out of buildings, pump out flooded cellars, and begin the enormous rebuilding of much of the city. More than 1000 women were hired to sew new clothing for the victims and the wages paid to these workers were the best many had seen in a decade. With the boost from those new wages, residents in the Springfield area were able to buy new clothing, appliances, furniture and other goods that had been lost in the flooding. And from that began the seeds of an economic revival that helped the city recover from one of the worst disasters to strike the area.

Aerial View of Springfield during  
the 1936 Flood  
Image from the National Archives



Springfield Technical High  
School sheltering some of those  
whose homes were destroyed  
during the flood.  
Image from [springfieldmuseums.org](http://springfieldmuseums.org)

#### Sources consulted for this article

- ◆ [Springfield, MA Convent Annals, 1935-1944.](#)
- ◆ [Massmoments.org](#)
- ◆ [Springfieldmuseums.org](#)
- ◆ [Newenglandhistoricalsociety.com](#)
- ◆ [National Archives](#)