

Flash Floods and Flooding

BEFORE THE FLOOD.....

What YOU can do:

- Know the flood risk and elevation above flood stage. If danger of flooding exists, be prepared to move to a place of safety. Know your evacuation routes.
- Keep your automobile fueled; if electric power is cut off, gas stations may not be able to operate pumps for several days.
- Store drinking water in clean bathtubs and in various containers. Water service may be interrupted, or your water source contaminated.
- Keep a stock of food that requires little cooking and no refrigeration; electric power may be interrupted.
- Keep first aid supplies on hand.
- Keep a NOAA Weather Radio, a battery-powered portable radio, emergency cooking equipment, and flashlights in working order.
- Install check valves in building sewer traps to prevent flood water from backing up into the drains of your home.

What YOUR COMMUNITY can do:

Assist hospitals and other operations which are critically affected by power failure by arranging for auxiliary power supplies.

River and rainfall readings are valuable to the Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) and the National Weather Service (NWS) in assessing flood conditions and taking appropriate actions. Advanced warning provided by early detection is critical to saving lives. Automatic flood detection is critical to saving lives. Automatic flood detection systems are available commercially for flood-prone communities. Contact your local NWS Office or (Emergency Preparedness Office) for further information on "Local Flood Warning Systems."

STAY INFORMED ABOUT THE STORM by listening to NOAA Weather Radio, Commercial Radio or Television for the latest FLASH FLOOD and FLOOD WATCHES, WARNINGS, and ADVISORIES.

TAKE ACTION!

When a flash flood WATCH is issued - Be alert to the signs of flash flooding and be prepared to evacuate at a moment's notice.

When a flash flood WARNING is issued for your area, or the moment you realize that a flash flood is imminent, act quickly to save yourself. YOU MAY HAVE ONLY SECONDS!

GO TO HIGHER GROUND - CLIMB TO SAFETY!

- Get out of areas subject to flooding. This includes dips, low spots, etc.
- Avoid already flooded and high velocity flow areas. Do not attempt to cross flowing streams or canals.
- If driving, be aware that the road bed may not be intact under flood waters. Turn around and go another way. NEVER drive through flooded roadways.
- If your vehicle stalls, leave it immediately and seek higher ground. Rapidly rising water may engulf your vehicle and its occupants and sweep them away. Remember, it's better to be wet than dead!
- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.
- Do not camp or park your vehicle along streams and canals, particularly during threatening weather.

WHEN YOU RECEIVE A FLOOD WARNING:

- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Move to a safe area before access is cut off by flood water.
- Continue monitoring NOAA Weather Radio, television, or emergency alert station for information.

DURING THE FLOOD:

- Avoid areas subject to sudden flooding.
- If you come upon a flowing stream where water is above your ankles, STOP! Turn around and go another way.
- Do not attempt to drive over a flooded road. The depth of water is not always obvious. The road bed may be washed out under the water, and you could be stranded or trapped.
- Children should NEVER play around high water, storm drains, or drainage canals.

AFTER THE FLOOD:

- If fresh food has come in contact with flood waters, throw it out.
- Boil drinking water before using. Wells should be pumped out and the water tested for purity before drinking. If in doubt, call your local public health authority.
- Seek necessary medical care at the nearest hospital. Food, clothing, shelter, and first aid may be available from the Red Cross and other volunteer groups.

- Do not visit disaster areas. Your presence might hamper rescue and other emergency operations.
- Electrical equipment should be checked and dried before being returned to service.
- Use flashlights, not lanterns, torches, or matches, to examine buildings. Flammables may be inside.
- Report broken utility lines to appropriate authorities.