

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FLOODING

Flooding is a year-round concern. These facts and information are to help you and your family to be better prepared in the event you encounter the effects of flooding.

Flash Flooding

- Flooding can occur as streams and rivers flow over their banks, when dams or levees break, with run-off from deep snow cover, or any time there is rainfall with significant duration and intensity.
- Flash floods can come rapidly and unexpectedly. They can occur within a few minutes or hours of excessive rainfall, when a dam or levee fails, or when there is a sudden release of water held by an ice or debris jam. Be cautious during storm seasons, or any time that flooding is common in your area.
- You may not have warning that a flash flood is approaching.
- Do not drive through flooded areas. If you see a flooded-out roadway ahead, turn around and find another route to get to your destination.
- Even if the water appears shallow enough to cross, do not attempt to cross a flooded road. Water can conceal dips, or worse, floodwaters can damage roadways, washing away the entire road surface and a significant amount of ground.
- Remember, 6 inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars, causing loss of control or possible stalling.
- One foot of water will float many vehicles.
- Almost half of all flash flood fatalities occur in vehicles. Contrary to popular belief, many people don't realize two feet of water on a bridge or highway can float most vehicles. If the water is moving rapidly, the car, truck, or SUV can be swept off the bridge or road and into the creek.
- Do not drive around a barricade. Barricades are there for your protection. Turn around and go another way!

What you can do before the flood

When you receive a Flood Watch

- A watch is issued when flooding is possible within the watch area. When a flood watch is issued, you should be aware of potential flood hazards. Everyone in a watch area should be ready to respond and act quickly.

- Have an evacuation plan in place before flooding occurs. Flooded roads may cut off your escape route. Head for higher ground before the water becomes too deep. Remember just six inches of rapidly flowing water can knock you off your feet. Many people are swept away wading through flood waters, resulting in injury or death.
- Discuss flood plans with your family. Everyone should know what to do in case all family members are not together. Discussing flood plans ahead of time helps reduce fear and anxiety and lets everyone know how to respond.
- Have a professional install check valves in plumbing to prevent flood waters from backing up into the drains of your home.
- Keep your automobile fueled. If electric power is cut off, gas stations may not be able to operate pumps for days.
- Keep a stock of food requiring little cooking and no refrigeration; electric power may be interrupted.
- Keep first aid supplies and prescription medicines on hand.

What you can do during the flood

When you receive a Flood Warning

- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately! Families should use only one vehicle to avoid getting separated and reduce traffic jams. Move to a safe area before access is cut off by flood water.
- Never try to walk, swim, drive, or play in flood water. You may not be able to see how fast the flood water is moving, see how fast the flood water is moving, or see holes or submerged debris.
- Children should NEVER play around high water, storm drains, viaducts, or arroyos. It is very easy to be swept away by fast moving water.

What you can do after the flood

- Do not visit disaster areas. Your presence might hamper rescue and other emergency operations.
- Report broken utility lines to appropriate authorities
- 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.
- If fresh or canned food has come in contact with flood waters, throw it out.

Local health and emergency services work very hard to keep us all safe. However, you and your families safety is your responsibility.