

# Flood Awareness Safety Tips

## TERMS TO KNOW

**Flash Flood Warning:** Indicates a flood will occur within a few hours of heavy rainfall, a dam or levee failure, or water released from an ice jam.

**Flood Warning:** Inundation of a normally dry area near a stream or other watercourse, or unusually severe ponding of water is expected.

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## ACT NOW TO BE PREPARED

- Learn the safest route from your home or business should you have to leave in a hurry.
- Develop and practice a “family escape plan” and identify a meeting place if family members become separated.
- Make an itemized list of all valuables including furnishings, clothing and other personal property. Keep the list in a safe place.
- Stockpile emergency supplies of canned food, medicine and first aid supplies and drinking water. Store drinking water in clean, closed containers.
- Plan what to do with your pets.
- Have a portable radio, flashlights, extra batteries and emergency cooking equipment available.
- Keep your automobile fueled. If electric power is cut off, gasoline stations may not be able to pump fuel for several days. Have a small disaster supply kit in the trunk of your car.
- Find out how many feet your property is above and/or below possible flood levels. When predicted flood levels are broadcasted, determine if you may be flooded.
- Keep materials like sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting and lumber handy for emergency water-proofing.



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## DURING THE FLOOD

- Monitor the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administrations (NOAA) Weather Radio or you local Radio and TV station broadcasts for information.

- If local officials advise evacuation, do so promptly.
- If directed to a specific location, go there.
- Know where the shelters are located.
- Bring outside possessions inside the house or secure all movable objects.
- If there is time, move essential items and furniture to upper floors in the house. Disconnect electrical appliances that cannot be moved. **DO NOT** touch them if you are wet or standing in water.
- Secure your home: lock all doors and windows.

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## TRAVEL WITH CARE

- Leave early to avoid being marooned on flooded roads.
- Follow recommended routes. **DO NOT** sightsee.
- As you travel, monitor NOAA Weather Radio and local Radio broadcasts for the latest information.
- Watch for washed-out roads, earthslides, broken water or sewer mains, loose or downed electrical wires and falling or fallen objects.
- Watch for areas where rivers or streams may suddenly rise and flood.
- **DO NOT** attempt to drive over a flooded road.




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## AFTER THE FLOOD

- Before entering a building, check for structural damage. Turn off any outside gas lines at the meter or tank. Let the building air out to remove foul odors or escaping gas.
- Upon entering the building, use a battery-powered flashlight. **DO NOT** use an open flame as a source of light. Gas may be trapped inside.
- Watch for electrical shorts and live wires before making certain the main power switch is off. **DO NOT** turn on electrical appliances until an electrician has checked the system and appliances.
- Throw out any medicine or food that has had contact with flood waters.
- Test drinking water for potability. Wells should be pumped out and water tested for drinking.
- If the public water system is declared “unsafe” by health officials, water for drinking and cooking should be boiled vigorously for 10 minutes.
- Shovel out mud with special attention to cleaning heating and plumbing systems.
- Flooded basements should be drained and cleaned as soon as possible. Structural damage can occur if drained too quickly. When surrounding waters have subsided, begin draining the basement in stages, about 1/3 of the water volume each day.

