

SELF SUFFICIENCY IS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



FLOODS

FEMA/Walter Jennings: FEMA News Photo

FLOOD FACTS

- 80% of flood deaths occur in vehicles, and most happen when drivers make a single, fatal mistake trying to navigate through flood waters.
- Just 6 inches of rapidly moving flood water can knock a person down.
- A mere 2 feet of water can float a large vehicle, even a bus.
- One-third of flooded roads and bridges are so damaged by water that any vehicle trying to cross stands only a 50% chance of making it to the other side.
- The Big Thompson Canyon Flood killed 140 people in 1976. It proved a tragic illustration of a sobering statistic - 95% of those killed in a flash flood try to outrun the waters along their path rather than climbing rocks or going uphill to higher grounds.

WHAT TO DO ...

Floods are the most common and wide-spread of all natural hazards. Some floods develop slowly, but flash floods can happen in just minutes. Below are some things you should know and tips to follow if a flood is headed your way:

Know your neighborhood flood history and consider purchasing flood insurance

Stay alert for changing weather conditions

Get out of areas subject to flooding like low spots, canyons, and areas downstream from dams

Do not attempt to cross water that is above your knees

Abandon a stalled vehicle and immediately move to higher ground

Monitor the NOAA Weather Radio, or your favorite news source for vital weather related information.

If flooding occurs, get to higher ground. Get out of areas subject to flooding. This includes dips, low spots, canyons, washes etc.

Avoid areas already flooded, especially if the water is flowing fast. Do not attempt to cross flowing streams. Turn Around Don't Drown (TM)

Road beds may be washed out under flood waters. NEVER drive through flooded roadways. Turn Around Don't Drown (TM) If your vehicle is suddenly caught in rising water, leave it immediately and seek higher ground.

Do not camp or park your vehicle along streams and washes, particularly during threatening conditions.

Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.

AFTER A FLOOD

LISTEN FOR NEWS REPORTS to learn whether the community's water supply is safe to drink.

AVOID FLOODWATERS; water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage. Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.

Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. **ROADS MAY HAVE WEAKENED** and could collapse under the weight of a car.

Stay away from **DOWNED POWER LINES**, and report them to the power company.

RETURN HOME only when authorities indicate it is safe.

STAY OUT of any building if it is surrounded by floodwaters.

USE EXTREME CAUTION when entering buildings; there may be hidden damage, particularly in foundations.

SERVICE DAMAGED SEPTIC TANKS, cesspools, pits, and leaching systems as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are serious health hazards.

CLEAN AND DISINFECT everything that got wet. Mud left from floodwater can contain sewage and chemicals.