

SAFETY MEMO

November 22nd, 2021 – Flash Floods

Did you know?

Background

Flash floods are sudden, fast-moving floods that typically occur within three to six hours of heavy rainfall. Flash floods can be dangerous because they happen quickly and can be unpredictable.

A flash flood watch means flooding is possible, while a flash flood warning is issued when a flood is about to occur or is already happening.

Emergency Preparedness

Develop an evacuation and communication plan and prepare an emergency supply bag to evacuate quickly. A supply bag should include but is not limited to:

- Personal documents (insurance, passport or identity cards)
- A change of clothing for all members of the household
- Prescriptions
- Non-perishable food items
- Flashlight and batteries
- Cellphone and charger

Remain aware and monitor local radio and television outlets. Immediately evacuate when evacuation orders are given or when water starts to rise and head to higher ground. If there is time, disconnect the utilities and appliances within the home.

Personal Safety

Do not walk through flood waters. It only takes 6 inches (15 cm) of moving water to knock you off your feet. If you are trapped by moving water, move to the highest vantage point and call the emergency services if possible.

Water may be deeper than it appears and can hide hazards such as sharp objects, electrical wires, toxins chemicals, and holes.

Electrical Safety

Try to avoid contact with floodwater that enters your home. Avoid rooms, including the basement, where floodwater has touched or submerged electrical outlets or cords. There may be electricity running through the water and there can be risk for electrical shock. Some warning signs include sparks, buzzing, crackling, snapping or popping noises.

Car Safety

A vehicle caught in swiftly moving water can be swept away in seconds. A car can stall in 6 inches (15 cm) of water, while 12 inches (30 cm) of water can float a car or small SUV. 18 inches (45 cm) of water can carry large vehicles away. If the vehicle is surrounded by moving water, get out of the car and seek higher ground.

- Do not drive into flooded roadways.
- Do not drive around a barricade.
- Avoid driving on bridges over fast-moving water: Floodwater can wash out a bridge with little or no warning.

Flood Aftermath

Damage from flood water can be devastating and present many dangers such as the water being contaminated with sewage or chemicals. Other safety issues to be aware of are gas leaks and live power lines which can be deadly even if not obvious at first glance.

Other points to keep in mind:

- Stay informed by listening / watching local news programs for updated road condition information
- Avoid disaster areas so that emergency personnel can do their job
- Wait for the all clear from authorities prior to returning to the area or entering buildings
- Contact your insurance provider to discuss property damage
- Stay in contact with family and loves ones to let them know you are safe

