



Flood Fact Sheet

1-WHAT IS A FLASH FLOOD?

Floods are among the most frequent and costly natural disasters in terms of human hardship and economic loss. As much as 90 percent of the damage related to all natural disasters (excluding droughts) is caused by floods and associated debris flows. Flash floods occur within six hours of a rain event, or after a dam or levee failure, or following a sudden release of water held by ice or debris jam, and flash floods can catch people unprepared.

2-WHY TALK ABOUT FLOODS?

Flooding occurs in known flood plains when prolonged rainfall over several days, intense rainfall over a short period of time, or an ice or debris jam causes a river or stream to overflow and flood the surrounding area. Severe thunderstorms can bring heavy rain in the spring and summer, or tropical cyclones can bring intense rainfall to the coastal and inland states in the summer and fall.

3-WHAT CAN I DO TO PREPARE FOR FLASH FLOODING?

In addition to completing the 4 Steps to Safety, do the following:

Learn about your area's flood risk and elevation above flood stage. Contact your local Red Cross chapter, emergency management office, local National Weather Service office, or planning and zoning department.

Talk to your insurance agent. Homeowners' policies do not cover flooding. Ask about the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

Get training -- take a first aid class from your local Red Cross chapter.

Use a NOAA Weather Radio with a tone-alert feature, or a portable, battery-powered radio (or television) for updated emergency information.

4-WHAT TO DO DURING A FLOOD WATCH

Listen continuously to a NOAA Weather Radio, or a portable battery-powered radio (or television) for updated emergency information.

Everyone in a WATCH area should be ready to respond and act quickly.

Be alert to signs of flooding, and if you live in a flood-prone area, be ready to evacuate at a moment's notice.

Follow the instructions and advice of local authorities.

Get your pre-assembled disaster supplies ready.

Fill your car's tank, in case an evacuation notice is issued.

Be prepared to evacuate.

5-WHAT TO DO DURING A FLOOD WARNING

Listen continuously to a NOAA Weather Radio, or a portable battery-powered radio (or television) for updated emergency information.

Be alert to signs of flooding

If you live in a flood-prone area or think you are at risk, evacuate immediately. Move quickly to higher ground. Save yourself, not your belongings.

Follow the instructions and advice of local authorities.

Flood Fact Sheet

Side Two



If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.

6-WHAT TO DO AFTER A FLASH FLOOD

Check yourself for injuries.

Protect yourself from further danger by putting on long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, sturdy shoes, and work gloves.

Continue listening to local radio for information.

Avoid loose or dangling power lines and report them to the power company, police or fire department

Stay out of any building if flood waters remain around the building.

Help neighbors who may require special assistance.

Use the telephone for emergency calls only.

