Safety Tips During a Flood

Flooding is a coast-to-coast threat to some parts of the United States and its territories nearly every day of the year. This article is designed to teach you how to stay safe in a flood event. If you know what to do before, during, and after a flood, you can increase your chances of survival and better protect your property. For instance, it is vital to know what to do if you are driving and hit a flooded road.

During a Flood

During a flood, water levels and the rate the water is flowing can quickly change. Remain aware, and monitor local radio and television outlets. Avoid floodwaters at all costs, and evacuate immediately when water starts to rise. Don't wait until it's too late!

1. **Stay informed.** Monitor local radio and television, including National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio (if possible), internet, and social media for information and updates.
2. **Get to higher ground.** If you live in a flood-prone area or are camping in a low-lying area, and get to higher ground immediately.
3. **Obey evacuation orders.** If told to evacuate, do so immediately. Lock your home when you leave. If you have time, disconnect utilities and appliances.
4. **Practice electrical safety.** Don't go into a basement, or any room, if water covers the electrical outlets or if cords are submerged. If you see sparks or hear buzzing, crackling, snapping, or popping noises—get out! Stay out of water that may have electricity in it!
5. **Avoid floodwaters.** Don't walk through floodwaters. It only takes six inches of moving water to knock you off your feet. If you are trapped by moving water, move to the highest possible point and call 911 for help.
6. **Do not drive into flooded roadways or around a barricade.** Turn Around, Don't Drown®! Water may be deeper than it appears and can hide many hazards (i.e. sharp objects, washed-out road surfaces, electrical wires, chemicals, etc.). A vehicle caught in swiftly moving water can be swept away in a matter of seconds. Twelve inches of water can float a car or small SUV, and 18 inches of water can carry away large vehicles.

Flood-Preparation Resources

1. Visit this link for an interactive flood map: Link opens in a new windowhttps://msc.fema.gov/portal/home.
2. Visit this page to find out the difference between a Flood Watch and a Flood Warning issued by the National Weather Service (NWS): Link opens in a new windowhttps://www.weather.gov/safety/flood-watch-warning.
3. This page gives step-by-step instructions on what you can do to prepare for possible flooding: Link opens in a new windowhttps://www.weather.gov/safety/flood-before.

U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Weather Service (NWS). (n.d.). *Flood safety tips and resources* & *During a flood*. Retrieved June 10, 2024, from https://www.weather.gov

Disclaimer: This document is intended for general information only. It does not provide the reader with specific direction, advice, or recommendations. You may wish to contact an appropriate professional for questions concerning your particular situation.