

# Flood Safety

Flash floods from heavy rains are the most dangerous hazard for Southeast Texas. With flow off the Gulf of Mexico providing abundant moisture, high rain rates are not uncommon, with greater than 4 inches per hour observed on occasion. When thunderstorms follow each other or “train” over one area, rainfall of several inches over a short period is not uncommon with flash flooding a result. It is important to understand what actions to take to protect yourself from flash flooding hazards.

## Flood Related Watches, Warnings, Advisories

**Flash Flood Watch: *Be Prepared, Stay Alert, Keep Watch.*** A watch is issued when conditions are favorable for flash flooding but occurrence, timing, and location is still uncertain.

**Flood Advisory: *Be advised, be cautious.*** A Flood Advisory is issued when flooding may cause significant inconvenience and if caution is not exercised, could lead to situations that may threaten life and/or property. Conditions are not quite as severe as with a warning.

**Flash Flood Warning: *Take Action!*** A warning is issued when potentially life threatening flash flooding is imminent or occurring. A flash flood is a sudden violent flood that can develop quickly...within hours.

**Flash Flood Emergency: *Extreme Danger!*** Rarely used. Reserved for rare cases of extreme danger to life and property from flash flooding, a historic event with an extreme threat to life and property.

## During a Flood

- Avoid walking or driving through flood waters. Turn Around, Don't Drown! Just 6 inches of moving water can knock you down, and 2 feet of water can sweep your vehicle away. Most flash flood fatalities occur in vehicles.
- If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car immediately and move to higher ground. Best option is to get out through the windows. Force door open if necessary before becoming completely submerged.
- Avoid camping or parking along streams, rivers and creeks during heavy rainfall. These areas can flood quickly and with little warning.
- If in a flood prone area from a nearby stream or creek you may be asked to evacuate and move to higher ground. Obey evacuation orders if given.
- Never drive around barricades.

## After A Flood

- Return home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded and watch out for debris, snakes, fire ants, alligators, etc. Floodwaters often erode roads and walkways.
- Do not attempt to drive through areas that are still flooded.
- Avoid standing water as it may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
- Photograph damage to your property for insurance purposes.

**3 SIMPLE STEPS FOR FLASH FLOOD SAFETY**

During a flood, water levels and the rate at which the water is flowing can quickly change. Remain aware and monitor local radio and television.

**1 GET TO HIGHER GROUND**  
Get out of the areas subject to Flooding

**2 DO NOT DRIVE INTO WATER**  
Do NOT drive or walk into flooded areas. It only takes 6" of water to knock you off your feet.

**3 STAY INFORMED**  
Monitor local radar, television, weather radio, internet or social media for updates.

WHEN FLOODED TURN AROUND DON'T DROWN

weather.gov/flood



For more information, click here:  
[weather.gov/floods](http://weather.gov/floods)  
[www.ready.gov/floods](http://www.ready.gov/floods)