



## Preparing for Floods and Flash Floods

Some simple advance preparation will help you be ready for possible floods in your area.

1. Know the flood warning system in your community, and be sure your family knows the warning. Instruct them in emergency procedures during a flood warning. If you live in an area subject to frequent or sudden floods, especially flash floods, you may wish to have family flood drills. Assign each family member an emergency task, such as gathering emergency supplies, turning off utilities, or listening to the radio for instructions.
2. Always keep fuel in your car — at least half a tank or enough for 100 miles. If electricity is cut off, gasoline pumps may not operate.
3. Keep on hand emergency supplies:
  - Battery powered radio and extra batteries in case of power failure.
  - Basic first aid items such as bandages, antiseptics, blankets, first aid handbook, and any special medicines (such as insulin) for family members.
  - A minimum of 2 quarts of water per person a day (a gallon is better). Store drinking water in a clean bathtub and various containers. The water supply should be enough to last your family and pets 3 or 4 days.
  - A supply of nonperishable foods requiring little or no cooking and no refrigeration. The supply should be large enough to keep your family and pets at least 3 to 4 days.
  - Can opener.
  - Emergency cooking equipment, such as a camp stove.
  - Candles, candle holders, flashlights with spare batteries, dry matches.
  - Materials like sandbags, lumber, plastic sheeting, hand tools, wire, ropes, fire extinguishers.
  - Extra fuel for your automobile stored in a metal (not glass) container.
  - Extra blankets.
  - Sanitary facilities. An emergency toilet can be constructed from any watertight container with a snug fitting lid. Keep chlorine bleach or lime on hand to eliminate odors.
  - Water purification tablets, chlorine bleach or 2% iodine to purify water.

4. “Flood-proof” your buildings:
  - Install check valves in sewer traps to prevent water from backing up in sewer drains.
  - Seal cracks in walls and floors with hydraulic cement.
  - Place heavy screens over lower windows to prevent breakage from floating objects.
5. Be ready to protect appliances from minor flooding. Put a half block of cement under each corner of refrigerators, freezers, washing machines and dryers. Use bricks or boards if you don’t have cement blocks.

## **Fire Hazards**

During a flood, fire danger is increased. In addition, fire departments may be unable to get to fires through high water. Watch for these fire hazards on your property:

1. Broken or leaking gas lines.
2. Flooded electrical circuits.
3. Submerged furnaces or electrical appliances.
4. Flammable or explosive materials coming from upstream.

Before floodwaters crest, turn off the main power switch if you think the electrical circuits are going to be underwater. **NEVER TOUCH THE SWITCH WHILE YOU ARE WET OR STANDING IN WATER.** Do not turn the electrical system back on until it has been inspected by an electrician.