

# Flood Safety

Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters - except fire. Floods can be slow or fast rising and generally develop over a period of days. Flash floods usually result from intense storms dropping large amounts of rain within a brief period. Flash floods occur with little or no warning and can reach full peak in only a few minutes.

In the United States, an average of 100 people lose their lives in floods annually, with flood damage averaging more than \$2 billion. The Midwest's "Great Flood of 1993" cost 48 lives and more than \$12 billion. Flash floods are the #1 weather-related killer in the United States.

## **Flood Safety**

### Before the flood:

- Find out if you live in a flood-prone area.
- Plan and practice an evacuation route.
- Have disaster supplies on hand.
- Develop an emergency communications plan.
- Learn about the National Flood Insurance Program.

### During the flood:

- Stay informed. Turn on a battery-operated radio or television to get the latest emergency information.
- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Avoid walking through floodwater. Water only six inches deep can sweep you off your feet if it is moving swiftly.

- Do not drive into a flooded street. Cars can be swept away by two feet of moving water or there may be unseen damage to the road. If you come to a flooded area turn around and go another way. Most flood-related deaths are caused by people driving through water.
- Watch out for fire hazards.



After the flood:

- Take care of yourself first.
- Dry out your home.
- Restore the utilities.
- Clean up.
- Rebuild and flood proof.
- Prepare for the next flood.

Protect yourself from the next flood with flood insurance, a flood response plan and community flood protection programs.

### **For more information:**

- [American Red Cross](#) information on flood and flash flood safety.
- [Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association](#) promotes sound floodplain management practices and the natural and cultural benefits of the floodplain.