



FLOOD RESOURCE FACT SHEET

FLOOD SAFETY

Listen to authorities. Always cooperate with emergency officials and rescue personnel. You can replace personal belongings, but you can't replace someone's life.

Limit travel. If there is standing water on a roadway, people should not walk or drive through the water, as it is difficult to judge its depth or movement below the surface. Just 6 inches of fast-moving water can knock a person down, and one foot can carry a vehicle away. *Turn around, don't drown.*

Avoid standing water. Standing water may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines. To report downed power lines, call NorthWestern Energy at 888-467-2669.

Avoid contact with floodwater. Floodwater is not the same as normal river or lake water. Floodwater contains potential contaminants that we are generally able to keep out of our rivers, streams and lakes (bacteria, viruses, cleaners, chemicals, etc.)

People should make all reasonable efforts to avoid coming in to contact with the flood water. Those who must work in flood-inundated areas should cover their skin with some type of water-impermeable (rubber) boots and gloves and wash exposed areas with soap and water and rinse thoroughly immediately after exposure. The Health Department also recommends residents ensure their tetanus shots are up to date. The department's walk-in clinic offers vaccinations on a sliding fee scale. Clinic hours are 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Wednesday. Call 406-258-4770 for more information.

Avoid electrical lines and equipment. Electrocution is the second-leading cause of death during floods. Turn off power at your service panel. Electrical current will travel through flood water.

Be alert to gas leaks. Turn off gas to your house before a flood. If you smell gas, report it to your gas company and avoid open flames.

Don't use gas engines or fires indoors during power outages. These pose risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and house fires.

Clean anything that has been wet. Flood water will be contaminated with sewage, oil, gasoline and a variety of chemicals that pose severe health risks.