

Flooding and Flash Flooding

Turn Around...Don't Drown!

- Many floods occur along streams and rivers. You can determine your risk by knowing your proximity to the water.
- Urban areas have a risk for flash floods due to increased runoff from buildings, roads and parking lots. Low spots, such as underpasses and basements, can become death traps.
- Dam failures have played a deadly role in the history of flash flooding. Be aware of dams upstream from your location. Earthen dams and associated embankments are more easily compromised by heavy rainfall.
- If a warning is issued or flooding is observed, move to higher ground.
- When camping or hiking near a stream or river, listen to the latest weather forecasts and keep away from the water if thunderstorms are expected.
- Do not attempt to walk or drive through a flooded roadway or intersection. Only six inches of fast-flowing water can knock an adult off their feet. And it takes just two feet of moving water to float a vehicle. Turn around, don't drown!
- Beware of flooding potential along the Lake Michigan shoreline in the wake of a line of strong thunderstorms with high winds that move across the lake. The winds push water to the east shoreline which then rebounds to the west shore as a flood wave called a "seiche."



Flooding Myths and Truths

MYTH: A 100-year flood occurs only once every 100 years.

TRUTH: The 100-year flood is an average; there is a 1% chance that a 100-year flood will occur in any given year.

MYTH: Flash floods occur only along flowing streams and rivers.

TRUTH: Flash floods can occur in urban areas where no streams are present.

MYTH: Homeowners insurance policies cover flooding.

TRUTH: Unfortunately, many homeowners do not find out until it is too late that their policies do not cover flooding. Contact your insurance company or agent to buy flood insurance.

MYTH: Larger vehicles, such as SUVs and pickups, are safe to drive through flood waters.

TRUTH: Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles, including SUVs and pickup trucks. If you come to a water-covered road or intersection, turn around, don't drown!