

Public Information Statement
National Weather Service Albany NY
800 AM EDT Fri Apr 25 2025

...Severe Weather Awareness Week Continues...

Today the focus is on flash floods.

Flash flooding is a rapid rise of water along a stream, or in a low lying or urban area. During the summer, the most common cause of flash floods is downpours associated with thunderstorms. However, flash floods can also result from dam breaks, including beaver dam breaks, or heavy rain from tropical storms.

Eastern New York and western New England are particularly susceptible to flash floods because of topography. Heavy rain falling on steep terrain creates an ideal situation as water rapidly moves down steep hillsides. Sometimes steep hillsides get so waterlogged that they slip and mud slides or debris flows occur. Flash floods present a threat to the urban motorist too. Underpasses or other low spots can fill rapidly with water. Driving into flood waters can quickly put you in three to six feet of water and drown your car's engine.

In July of 2023, Hamilton County New York saw flash floods destroy roads. In July of 2021, Windham County Vermont was hit hard by flash floods. In October of 2019, the western Mohawk Valley and the southern Adirondacks were hit by devastating flash floods which washed out roads and resulted in one fatality. The latest reports of severe weather and flash floods can be found at: <https://www.spc.noaa.gov/exper/reports/>

A flood watch means that conditions are favorable for flooding. Continue with your daily activities, but be prepared to avoid low-lying areas when a flash flood warning is issued. A flash flood warning means that flooding is imminent or occurring. Flood waters can rise rapidly. Seek high ground immediately when a flash flood warning is issued, and never drive through flood waters.

Never underestimate the power of water. More than half of all flash flood related deaths occur in automobiles. Two feet of flowing water will cause most cars to float. Flooding hazards are increased at night when visibility is reduced. The National Weather Service urges you to respect all barriers that warn of flooded roads. Turn around, don't drown.

Those with interests along rivers, creeks and streams should remain alert for flash floods. A normally placid stream can swell to a 10 foot deep raging river in less than an hour if thunderstorm downpours inundate an area upstream. Remember, six inches of flowing water can knock a person off their feet. People camping along rivers or creeks are particularly at risk. When outdoors, keep alert for muddy rapidly rising streams, or a loud roaring sound upstream. If observed, head for higher ground immediately.

Additional flood safety information can be found at: <https://www.weather.gov/safety/flood>.

NOAA Weather Radio offers one way to receive immediate relay of flash flood warnings. Many local television and radio stations also broadcast weather alerts. Computers and wireless devices can receive warnings. National Weather Service flash flood warnings are relayed as wireless emergency alerts to wireless phones by FEMA.

For more information on Severe Weather Awareness Week, go to our web site www.weather.gov/albany or visit us on social media @NWSAlbany.

Tomorrow we conclude Severe Weather Awareness Week with a look back at the key points concerning severe weather.

NWS Albany