Flood Safety Awareness Week

NWS Water Resources Information

The National Weather Service in Burlington, VT encourages residents of Vermont and Northern New York to be aware of the dangers from flooding in the North Country, and take time during this week to review flood threats and flood safety practices. A different educational topic will be featured each day during the week. Today's topic: NWS Water Resources Information.

The NWS homepage, www.weather.gov, provides up to date weather and water advisory, watch, and warning information for the U.S. and its territories. However, the NWS provides many additional resources to help emergency managers, public officials and private citizens make water decisions.

Flood Warnings
When flooding threatens, the National Weather Service may issue different types of warnings, depending on the flood threat:

Flood Warnings for Major Rivers – These warnings are issued for specific points on major rivers, and include forecasts of water levels and indications of flood severity:

- Minor Flooding - minimal or no property damage, but possibly some public threat or inconvenience
- Moderate Flooding - some inundation of structures and roads near streams. Some evacuations of people and/or transfer of property to higher elevations are necessary.
- Major Flooding - extensive inundation of structures and roads. Significant evacuations of people and/or transfer of property to higher elevations.

Flood Warnings for Small Rivers and Streams – These warnings are issued for smaller rivers and streams. River gage information may or may not be available.

Flash Flood Warnings – These warnings are issued for an area when rapid, life threatening rises in water levels are expected. Flash floods may be caused by very heavy rainfall in a very short period of time, a dam or levee failure, or sudden release of water held by an ice or debris jam can also lead to flash floods. When a Flash Flood Warning is issued or flash flooding is observed, time is of the essence. Immediate action must be taken to protect life and property.

Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service (AHPS)
AHPS provides a suite of river and flood forecasts and water information that includes current and forecast river levels, as well as precipitation totals. AHPS also provides longer term probabilistic forecasts of river levels for customers making risk based decisions. AHPS can be accessed by going to the NWS Burlington home page at www.weather.gov/btv, then click the Rivers and Lakes icon, or go to water.weather.gov.

Flood Inundation Mapping

The ability to look into the future to see how many city blocks and roads might be flooded is becoming clearer with flood inundation mapping. NOAA's NWS and National Ocean Service are collaborating with the USGS, USACE, FEMA and other partners to develop these inundation maps for flooding. http://water.weather.gov/ahps/inundation.php

Weather Prediction Center (WPC) Precipitation Forecasts
WPC provides precipitation forecasts for the entire U.S., including Puerto Rico. WPC also issues excessive rainfall forecasts, short-range discussions on heavy rainfall events, and snowfall and freezing rain probabilities. www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/

NWS River Forecast Centers (RFCs)
The National Weather Service has a network of thirteen RFCs across the United States. These RFCs collect, process, and provide water resource and river forecasts and information for major river basins across the country. http://water.weather.gov/ahps/rfc/rfc.php

Flood Safety Awareness Website
On this page, you will find information on what to do before, during and after a flood.
www.floodsafety.noaa.gov

Staying aware of an evolving weather situation can help you prepare when flooding or other weather hazards impact your area. Be a Force of Nature!
www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/

Join us tomorrow on the final day of flood safety awareness week to find out about some great flood resources offered by several NWS partners!