



Flooding

...what you should know and best practices to stay safe!

Nationwide, flooding causes more fatalities than any other type of severe weather. Several factors contribute to flooding. The two main factors are the intensity of rainfall and how long rain occurs over any given location. Urbanization, topography, soil type, and soil moisture also play roles in the severity of flood conditions.

Flooding in the Carolinas can result from several different weather situations. Slow moving thunderstorms can dump heavy rain over the same location resulting in rapid flash flooding, or days of steady rain can cause creeks and rivers to flood over large areas. Lastly, any thunderstorm moving across metropolitan or urbanized areas can cause flash flooding due to the amount of runoff generated by highly developed areas. Tropical storms and hurricanes can also be prolific flood producers.

Rushing water in the form of a flash flood can quickly become deadly. Running water that is deep enough to cover just half of an automobile's tires is usually enough to make the vehicle begin to float and be carried by the current. Most flood deaths occur in automobiles.

Flooding is dangerous any time of day, but most dangerous at night when it is difficult to observe. Limited visibility at night makes it not only more difficult to see flood waters, but also nearly impossible to gage water depth and whether is standing or flowing. In many cases drivers who enter the water severely misjudge the depth and strength of the flood waters.

When flooding is possible, the National Weather Service will issue a Flood Watch. This tells you to remain alert to the possibility of heavy rain and flooding within the next six to twelve hours. Once a flood warning is issued, then it is time to take action. When a warning is issued for your area, it means that flooding has been reported or is imminent. This is the time to closely monitor the situation and move quickly if flood waters threaten. One of the best practices to observe during flooding is avoiding unnecessary travel.



Photo Source: WBTW-TV



When approaching water flowing over the road, turn around and go the other way – it's dangerous.

Turn Around, Don't Drown!