

Flooding Safety: Be Aware That Flooding Can Occur While Camping & Hiking

CAMPING SAFETY TIPS



FLASH FLOODING

Know Your Action

Avoid hiking in canyons
Don't camp near streams or rivers

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Check the forecast at [weather.gov](https://www.weather.gov)
Always pack for inclement weather, regardless of the forecast!



HEAT

Know Your Action

Remain hydrated/bring extra water
Wear light, loose fitting clothing
Use sunscreen
Take breaks in shade



LIGHTNING

Know Your Action

Remain weather-ready
If you hear thunder or see lightning...
go immediately to an enclosed building or hard-topped vehicle.
Avoid isolated tall trees or ridge tops.



FLOOD WARNING

A Flood Warning is issued when flooding is **happening** or will happen soon. Some roads will be **flooded**.

Move to higher ground.

Never drive through flooded roads.

take action.

FLOOD WATCH

A Flood Watch is issued when flooding is possible.

Stay tuned to radio/TV, follow **weather.gov** and be ready to seek higher ground.

Learn more at [weather.gov/flood](https://www.weather.gov/flood).

be prepared.



Do You Really Know How Deep the Water is?

12 inches of fast-moving water can carry away a small car.

6 inches of fast-moving water can knock over and carry away an adult.

18-24 inches of fast-moving water can carry away most large SUVs, vans and trucks.

Flash flooding can escalate quickly.

Heavy rain can lead to sudden flash floods, whether you're on the road or at a campground. Will you be ready?



Set up a way to get weather warnings on your phone



When alerted to a flash flood, get to higher ground immediately



Never enter floodwaters in a vehicle or on foot



weather.gov

Flood Safety: Key Points For Camping & Hiking

Frequent Facts

- **Most flash flood fatalities occur at night and most victims are people who become trapped in automobiles.**
- **Six inches of fast-moving water can knock you off your feet; a depth of two feet will cause most vehicles to float.**
- **Flooding can occur any time of the year.**
- **Heavy rainfall can bring a danger of flash flooding, but sometimes even light/moderate rainfall can trigger dangerous floods. Dry streambeds can become raging torrents in minutes with no rain in sight!**
- **Heavy rain can cause debris flows especially in hilly or mountainous terrain. Soil gives way and slides downhill picking up branches, trees, and rocks. Debris flow can completely destroy campsites and bury campers in a matter of minutes.**

Preparedness Information

- **Avoid walking, swimming, or driving in flood waters.**
- **Check the weather forecast before leaving for outdoor trips.**
- **Watch for signs of approaching storms.**
- **In hilly terrain, flash floods can strike with little or no advance warning. Distant rain may be channeled into gullies and ravines, turning a quiet stream into a rampaging torrent in minutes. Never camp on low ground next to streams since a flash flood can catch you while you're asleep**
- **If you come upon flood waters, stop, turn around, and go another way. Climb to higher ground.**
- **If a campground's alarm system relies on electricity, have an alternate method to notify campers in case of power failure.**
- **NOAA Weather Radio is the only direct means to receive warnings from the National Weather Service.**
- **Whether you're on the road or camping, will you be ready for sudden flash flooding? Most flash flood warnings will not trigger Wireless**

Emergency Alerts on your phone. Make sure you are receiving warnings: www.weather.gov/subscribe.

- If flooding occurs while you're outdoors, immediately get to higher ground, and NEVER enter floodwaters in a vehicle or on foot.
- What's the fastest way to escape to higher ground? Are nearby roads likely to flood blocking evacuation routes?
- Are you planning to camp or hike near a stream or river? Remember that it doesn't have to rain directly over you for there to be flooding. If you notice even a slight rise in water level, seek higher ground immediately!
- When hiking, follow these steps:
 1. Wait for everyone in the crew to arrive at the stream, and make a determination to cross.
 2. Do not walk through a flowing stream on foot where water is above your ankles.
 3. When walking through or on rocks or logs over a stream, Loosen pack buckles so if you fall you can easily get away from your pack and it will not drag you under
 4. Wait for everyone to cross before continuing (in case the last person needs assistance)

Watch & Warning Definitions

- **Flood Watch:** Flooding is possible in your area. Remain alert for quickly rising water. Know what counties or parishes are in the watch area by listening to NOAA Weather Radio or your local radio/television outlets.
- **Flash Flood Warning:** Flash flooding is imminent or has already been reported. Move to higher ground immediately.

Resource Materials

- (Flood Safety): <https://www.weather.gov/safety/flood>
- (Latest Hazards): <https://www.weather.gov/rnk/>
- (Radar): <https://radar.weather.gov/>
- (Low Bandwidth Radar):
<https://www.weather.gov/radarliteloop?radarid=KFCX>
- (River Gauges & Creeks):
<https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/index.php?wfo=rnk>
- (Precipitation):
https://water.weather.gov/precip/index.php?location_type=wfo&location_name=rnk
- (Local Flooding Resources):
https://www.weather.gov/rnk/emer_flooding
- <https://www.weather.gov/safety/flood-watch-warning>
- Virginia Flood Info: <https://www.weather.gov/safety/flood-states-va>
- West Virginia Flood Info: <https://www.weather.gov/safety/flood-states-wv>
- North Carolina Flood Info: <https://www.weather.gov/safety/flood-states-nc>
- Other Flood Info: <https://www.ready.gov/floods>