

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE RALEIGH NC
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SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK IN NORTH CAROLINA
MARCH 01 - 09, 2009

This week has been declared North Carolina's Severe Weather Awareness week for 2009. All week long, the National Weather Service will be issuing informative messages to help you prepare for severe weather.

Today's topic will be flooding. Flooding and flood deaths are a serious nationwide problem. 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 a role.

Flooding in North Carolina can result from several different weather situations. Slow moving thunderstorms can repeatedly move over the same location. Days of steady rain can cause creeks and rivers to rise. And thunderstorms moving across metropolitan areas can cause flash flooding due to the amount of runoff generated by urbanized areas.

Rushing water in the form of a flash flood can quickly become deadly. Just a few inches of fast-moving flood water can knock you off of your feet while just one to two feet of moving water can force a car off the road. In combination with the force of flowing water...water creates buoyancy. Two feet of water will float most cars and wash them away. Most flood deaths occur in automobiles. When approaching water flowing over the road, turn around and go the other way. Don't drown...turn around.

Knowing your area's flood risk is also very important. Also check your homeowner's or renter's insurance. Many policies do not cover flooding and many areas across North Carolina are subject to flooding although not officially declared within a flood plain. Just because flood damage is not in your insurance policy does not mean your house cannot flood.

Before rain and flood waters threaten...asses your flood risk and know where you would go if you needed to evacuate. Sometimes your escape route can flood before your house. Also realize, just because areas around your home have never flooded before does not mean you will never experience a flood.

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. Once a flash 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.

If advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Move to a safe location before access is cut off by flood waters. Never allow children to Play around high water, creeks, streams or storm drains.

When heavy rain and flooding threatens your area, stay informed by listening to NOAA weather radio, local television and radio.

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