



FLOOD SAFETY TIPS

1) Don't drive through flooded areas.

As little as two feet of water could sweep your vehicle away. There is no way of knowing what debris or hazards lie underwater. Do not risk your vehicle or your life.

If your vehicle is caught in the water, do not panic. Take off your seatbelt, roll down the windows or open the door as soon as you can. Hardware stores carry tools to break car windows in an emergency. Buy one and keep it in an accessible place.

2) Don't walk through flowing water.

An adult can be knocked down by just 6 inches of flowing water. If it is necessary to cross water, choose an area where the water is still and use a long stick or pole to check for water depth and debris.

3) Avoid dangerous areas.

Culverts and storm sewers are always dangerous areas, but become particularly hazardous during floods. Avoid these areas completely and educate your family to keep a safe distance.

4) Electricity and water do not mix.

Next to drowning, electrocution is the second leading cause of flood related deaths. If you must evacuate your home, shut off the power and unplug your appliances. However, remember - do not touch any electrical appliances if you or the appliance is wet. Also, beware of downed power lines and electrical wires. Avoid these hazards and contact emergency services.

5) Be prepared to get wet - always wear your lifejacket or personal flotation device.

Most drowning victims never intended to go in the water. Wear a lifejacket when building dikes, riding in a boat or anytime you are working close to water. There are many types of lifejackets and personal flotation devices (PFDs) available. Choose one that is brightly coloured and fits comfortably over your clothes.

6) Cold water kills.

Spring water temperatures are dangerously cold. While hypothermia could take up to an hour to set in, cold water shock can kill in minutes. Wear warm clothing and your lifejacket when working around water.

In case of an accidental fall into cold water, stay calm and remember the **1 – 10 – 1** principle:

- You have 1 minute to regain control of your breathing and orient yourself in the water.
- You have 10 minutes of meaningful movement to swim to safety or get yourself on top of a floating object such as an overturned boat.
- You have 1 hour before hypothermia sets in and you fall unconscious. Do what you can to keep your body out of the water and make yourself visible to rescuers.

7) Watch your step.

Floodwaters can carry all kinds of debris. Wear appropriate footwear and be careful where you walk.

8) Supervise children around water.

Educate your family about the dangers of water. Always supervise children when they are playing near water and make sure they are wearing their lifejacket or PFD.

9) Be prepared – carry safety gear.

While working in flooded areas, always be prepared. In addition to your lifejacket or PFD, everyone should wear a whistle or other sound signalling device. Keep throwing aids nearby when working in a boat or on a dike. Every home and vehicle should be equipped with a well-stocked first aid kit.

10) In case of emergency – know the steps.

Every year, rescuers drown in an attempt to save others. In case of an emergency, stay calm and follow the ladder approach to save a drowning victim.

Ladder Approach:

Talk

Start by communicating with the drowning victim. Instruct the victim to remain calm and swim towards safety.

Throw

Use a throwing aid or other buoyant object to throw to the drowning victim. Be sure to kneel or lie down when pulling the victim to safety.

Reach

If you are close enough, use objects such as branches, paddles or even clothing to reach out to the victim. Be sure to kneel or lie down when pulling the victim to safety.

Row

If available, take a boat to rescue the victim. Wear your lifejacket and bring another lifejacket or rescue aid to recover the victim.

Go

Swimming to rescue the victim is always a last resort. Always inform bystanders that you are entering the water and make sure they stay near. Wear your lifejacket and bring a rescue aid with you.