

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT

Tuesday, March 17th, 2009

...2009 National Flood Safety Awareness Week...

The National Weather Service continues the annual Flood Safety Awareness Week campaign today through Friday, March 20th.

The theme for today is “Turn Around, Don’t Drown”, which is a National Weather Service campaign to warn the public of the hazards of walking or driving through flood waters.

Unfortunately, too many people underestimate the force and power of water. As a result, on average more deaths occur due to flooding each year than from any other severe weather related hazard, including tornadoes. More than half of all flood related deaths result from vehicles being swept away downstream by flood water. Of these deaths, many could have been prevented by simply not driving into flooding areas.

The following flood safety rules can help save your life.

- Monitor NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, or your favorite news source, for vital weather related information.
- If flooding occurs, get to higher ground immediately! Get out of areas which are subject to flooding. Such areas include any low spots, dips in roads, canyons, and washes.
- Avoid areas which are already flooded, especially if the water is flowing fast. Never attempt to cross flowing streams. It only takes 6 inches of quick moving water to knock a person off of their feet.
- Flooded roads often have significant damage hidden by the water. Never drive through flooded roadways as most vehicles lose contact with the road with 6 inches of water, and only 18 to 24 inches deep can float most automobiles. Turn around, don’t drown!
- Do not allow children to play near high water, storm drains or ditches. Hidden dangers could lie beneath the water, and they could be swept away by flowing flood waters.
- Do not camp or park your vehicle along streams and washes, especially during threatening conditions.
- Be particularly cautious at night when it is much harder to recognize flood dangers.

Additional information about Flood Safety Awareness Week can be found at WWW.FLOODSAFETY.NOAA.GOV.