

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT

Wednesday, March 18, 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 flood terminology.

Floods can occur nationwide and are the deadliest severe weather related killer in the United States, second only to heat waves in all weather related deaths. Flooding can take many forms, including river flooding, ice jams, urban flooding, and flash flooding. Each of these can be life threatening, so you need to take action immediately if the threat exists.

Here are a few of the terms that you may hear from the National Weather Service when there is a threat of flooding.

- A flood is elevated water levels that pose a potential threat to life or property. The elevated water levels may come from a river or stream or otherwise dry areas. You need to be aware of a flood because you may need to protect yourself and property if necessary.
- A flash flood is water that rises very rapidly and within approximately six hours after a causative event such as heavy rain, ice jams, or dam breaks. You need to respond very quickly to a flash flood to protect your life and property. Flash flooding is different from other kinds of flooding because the water associated with flash flooding rises much more rapidly than it does with other kinds of flooding. In addition, flash flooding occurs shortly after the event whereas other kinds of flooding occur several hours or more after the event.
- When a Flood or Flash Flood Watch is issued, it means conditions are favorable for flooding to occur.
- When a Flood or Flash Flood Warning is issued, it means flooding is occurring or imminent.
- Minor Flooding means minimal or no property damage is expected to occur, but the flooding could cause some public threat or inconvenience.
- Moderate flooding means some inundation of structures and roads near rivers or streams will occur. Some evacuations of people to higher elevations are necessary.
- Major flooding is when there is extensive inundation of structures and roads along with possible significant evacuations of people to higher elevations.

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