

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT

Friday, March 19, 2010

...2010 National Flood Safety Awareness Week...

The National Weather Service's annual Flood Safety Awareness Week campaign comes to an end today.

The final topic for this week is flood safety.

Based on a 30 year period, floods are the deadliest severe weather related killer in the United States, second only to heat waves in the number of all weather related deaths. More than half of all flood related deaths are drownings that result from vehicles caught in flood waters and then swept downstream or from people simply walking into flood waters and being swept away. Many of these drownings are preventable, but people often underestimate the force of water.

Flooding can occur nationwide, and takes many different forms, from river flooding to flash flooding to snowmelt flooding. It can occur anywhere, at any time. Many people do not realize that as little as 6 inches of quick moving water can knock a person off of their feet. A water depth of 18 to 24 inches can float most automobiles, including trucks and sport utility vehicles. While most floods cannot be prevented, there are simple steps you can take to protect your life and property.

The following is a summary of safety tips people can use to help protect themselves and their property in case of a flood.

- If flooding occurs, get to higher ground and stay away from areas which are subject to flooding.
- Do not allow anyone to walk or play near high water, storm drains, or ditches. Hidden dangers could lie beneath the water.
- Flooded roads could have significant damage hidden by the water. Never drive across floodwaters or flooded roads. Never ignore barricades, as they are placed there for your protection.
- Do not camp or park your vehicle along streams or washes, particularly when threatening weather conditions exist.
- Be especially cautious at night when it is much more difficult to recognize flood dangers.
- Prepare a family disaster plan, and check to see if your homeowners insurance covers flood damage.

Additional information about Flood Safety Awareness Week is available at WWW.FLOODSAFETY.NOAA.GOV.