

## Head for High Ground

Never underestimate the power of flood waters. Even a mere six inches of fast-moving water can knock you down. Floods usually develop over a few days and you may be alerted by broadcast warnings and given instructions about evacuation. However, flash floods can occur without warning and they cause more deaths than any other kind of weather condition.

These floods result from heavy rain, dam failure, or collapse of a natural dam of debris. Flash flood waters can reach the height of a two-story building. They can move with great speed, carrying trees, large rocks, and debris. Flash floods can destroy bridges and buildings. Whether you can swim or not, you could quickly drown in moving water.



### **Here are more reminders about drowning hazards during flood emergencies:**

- ◆ Wear an approved Personal Flotation Device when working in or around water.
- ◆ Do not walk in floodwaters.
- ◆ Supervise children closely. Do not allow them near high water, storm drains and other water hazards.
- ◆ Observe all hazard warnings on roads.
- ◆ Take the recommended routes; do not try shortcuts.
- ◆ Avoid areas subject to flash flooding such as gullies and creek beds, particularly during wet weather or thunderstorms.
- ◆ Watch for flooding at low areas on the highway, bridges and overpasses.
- ◆ Never drive a vehicle into water if you are not certain of the depth.
- ◆ If the vehicle stalls in rising water, get out to safety rather than attempting restarting it. Climb to higher ground. Nearly half of all flash flood fatalities are auto related.
- ◆ Be extra cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.
- ◆ Don't work or travel alone.
  - ◆ Never go sightseeing during a disaster. Stay away from floods and storms.
    - ◆ Avoid the waterfront during a hurricane because of the danger of storm surge. This high water caused by the wind is the greatest killer during hurricanes. The torrential rain of a hurricane can also trigger flash floods inland.
    - ◆ Also stay away from the waterfront following an earthquake. A tsunami, a high wave caused by a quake, can sweep over the oceanfront resulting in loss of life.



***Floodwater is treacherous. The possibility of drowning is very real if you attempt to cross the water on foot or if you are caught in rising water while operating heavy equipment or an automobile.***