

Welcome back to the Public Health Preparedness Press!



Each month, this newsletter will keep you informed about seasonal preparedness topics, public health awareness campaigns, and tools you can use both in your work and in your everyday life. Whether it's extreme weather, emergency planning, or national health observances, we're here to keep preparedness top of mind year-round.

Flood Preparedness & Safety

Flooding is the most common natural disaster in the United States and can happen almost anywhere. Heavy rain, rapid snowmelt, coastal storms, or overflowing rivers and dams can all cause flooding. Even areas considered "low risk" can be affected. Preparing now can help keep your family safe and protect your property.



Know Your Flood Risk

Residents should understand their risk for flooding and stay informed:

- Flood maps provide guidance but flooding can happen outside mapped zones.
- Sign up for local emergency alerts and **community warning systems**.
- Monitor **Emergency Alert System (EAS)** and **NOAA Weather Radio** for flood warnings.
- Learn evacuation routes and shelter plans for your area.

Protect Your Home and Valuables

Flood damage can be costly, and many homeowner's insurance policies **do not cover floods**.

Consider these precautions:

- Purchase or renew flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

- Policies may take **up to 30 days** to take effect so buy early.
- Store important documents in **waterproof containers** or secure digital backups.
- Move valuables to higher levels or safe areas.
- Clear debris from drains and gutters to prevent water buildup.
- Consider installing check valves or a sump pump with a battery backup.



Preparing Your Household

Having a household plan can save lives and reduce stress during flooding:

- Include pets in your emergency plan.
- Practice evacuation and shelter procedures.
- Gather emergency supplies for several days, such as:



- Water (1 gallon per person per day)
- Non-perishable foods
- Medications
- Flashlights and batteries
- Cleaning supplies and basic tools

- Keep a **battery-powered or hand-crank weather radio**.

Staying Safe During a Flood

Floodwaters are dangerous — safety should always come first:

- Evacuate immediately if instructed by authorities.
- Never drive, walk, or swim through floodwaters (“**Turn Around, Don’t Drown**”).
- Stay off bridges over fast-moving water.
- If trapped in a vehicle, stay inside and move to the roof if water rises.
- If trapped in a building, move to the highest level and signal for help if necessary.
- Contact healthcare providers if medical needs arise, and call **9-1-1** in emergencies.

Staying Safe After a Flood

Returning home too soon or cleaning up unsafely can be hazardous:

- Only return home when authorities declare it safe.
- Wear **gloves, boots, and protective clothing** during cleanup.
- Avoid wading in floodwater — it may be contaminated or electrically charged.
- Be aware of displaced animals, including snakes.
- Watch for mold growth; those with lung conditions or weakened immunity should avoid affected areas.
- Use generators or gasoline-powered tools **only outdoors, away from windows**, to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

Key Reminders

- **Where it can rain, it can flood.**
- Just **6 inches of moving water** can knock a person down; **1 foot** can sweep away a vehicle.
- Flood preparedness can save lives, protect property, and reduce stress.



What's Next?

In future issues of the Public Health Preparedness Press, we'll continue exploring topics that matter to our work and our community, like emergency communication, public health response roles, and seasonal hazards.

If you have ideas, questions, or want to highlight team efforts in preparedness, reach out! Let's make this a helpful, interactive resource for everyone.

Thanks for reading! 😊