

Tips for staying safe around flood water

Never allow children or pets to play near or venture into flood waters. In addition to the health risks posed by numerous pathogens that thrive in unsanitary flood water, unseen currents can quickly sweep even strong swimmers downstream and murky water can conceal dangerous debris.

Stay away from storm drains, ditches and river areas. Flood waters may be contaminated by oil, gasoline or raw sewage. Contact with water may cause injury from underground or downed power lines.

Never underestimate the swiftness of the water. Flooded rivers and streams are unpredictable. Even though the surface water may be smooth, the water is moving very fast.

Flooded streams and rivers are not safe for recreational boating. Never tube, kayak or canoe in floodwater or on flood-swollen streams or rivers.

Do NOT drink flood water, which may be contaminated. Avoid getting flood water in your eyes, nose and mouth. Individuals exposed to floodwater should wash their hands thoroughly with warm, soapy water.

If someone falls into or is trapped in flood water

- Do not go after the victim!
- Reach: if possible, extend a branch, rope or other item to the individual in the water.
- Throw the victim something to use as a flotation device (spare tire, large ball, etc).
- Call 911. Stay calm and give rescuers accurate location information.