

Prepare...



Because
You Care

Flash Floods

Flash floods are a common and widespread disaster that can occur anywhere in the United States. Flash floods are the number one cause of weather related deaths. The sheer force of just six inches of swiftly moving water can knock people off their feet. Cars are easily swept away in just two feet of water. Flash floods can occur with little or no warning-and can reach full peak within minutes. Rapidly rising walls of water can reach heights of 30 feet or more and are generally accompanied by a deadly cargo of debris.

The National Weather Service will issue a flash flood "watch" when flash flooding is possible within the designated watch area be alert. A flash flood "warning" will be issued when a flash flood has been reported or is imminent- take necessary precautions. No area is immune to flash floods.

In mountainous regions flash floods can strike with little or no warning. District rain may be channeled into gullies and ravines, turning a quiet streamside campsite into a rampaging torrent in minutes. In areas recently ravaged and left exposed by wildfire, such as the 1994 Chelan County burn, heavy rains from thunderstorms or warm rain and snowmelt, can also create mudslides and landslides, as well as flash floods. In Chelan County alone, 26 people have perished from flash floods since 1925.

Observe the following flash flood rules. They could save your life!

- Keep alert for signs of rain (thunder and lightning), both where you are and upstream.
- Be especially cautious at night. It's harder to recognize the danger at night.
- Know where high ground is and how to get there quickly.
- Watch for rising water levels.
- Don't try to outrace a flood on foot. If you see or hear it coming move to higher ground as fast as you can.
- Don't try to drive through flooded areas.
- Abandon your vehicle if water begins to rise over the road, and head for higher ground immediately.
- During threatening weather listen to commercial radio or TV or NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) Weather Radio for "watch" and "warning" bulletins.

*For more information, contact your
local emergency management office
list at right, or call the state's
Emergency Management office
(800) 562-6108*