



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health

Basic Flood Preparedness

Flooding is the most common disaster in the U.S. and can cause a variety of problems to urban and rural communities. However, by utilizing these suggestions, you can learn how to stay safe before, during and after a flood.

BEFORE

- Know what is going on in your community, and try to learn about problem flooding areas in the past. This can give you perspective on your situation.
- Make sure your vehicle has a full tank of gas, and that you have a mobile disaster kit, as well as supplies (food, water, medication, personal supplies) in your home for at least 72 hours of sheltering in place.
- If you don't have a vehicle, make arrangements with public transportation, or a friend or relative.
- Consider a waterproof and/or fireproof box to hold important personal documents.
- Rural homes/communities that may be cut off from stores may need significantly more resources.
- If you require consistent medical care (i.e. kidney dialysis, cancer treatment, etc.) contact your health care provider and talk about what to do in the event of a disaster.

DURING

- Stay informed by local news/officials on flooding progress.
- Follow evacuation or shelter in place warnings.
- If you must evacuate and there is time, unplug appliances to prevent electrical shock later. Turn off gas, power and water, if possible.
- Evacuate pets in some kind of size-appropriate carrier.
- If evacuation routes are given, do not deviate from those routes. Shortcuts or alternate routes may be blocked.
- Do not go around barricades.
- Be alert for washed out or flooded roadways.
- Do not walk/drive into flooded areas if possible. Water that appears shallow may have washed out roadways.
- Listen for info from local officials on how to safely use water to drink, cook or clean. If you have water concerns, contact your public water system. When in doubt, use bottled water.

AFTER

- Stay informed by local news/officials on flooding progress.
- Contact friends and family to let them know you are safe.
- Wait for an "all clear" before returning to impacted areas.
- If you are returning to your home following a flood evacuation, return during the day so you don't need electricity.
- If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows, and leave the house. Notify your gas company, as well as fire officials and law enforcement.
- After handling contaminated materials, wash hands with soap and uncontaminated water before touching yourself, anyone else, food or cooking utensils. Don't eat anything in contact with flood water.
- If utilizing a generator, do not run indoors, and leave 3-4 feet of clear space on all sides to ensure appropriate ventilation.
- Clean with water and bleach (1 cup bleach to 1 gallon water).



Photo by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic license

