

10 Tips for Flash Flood Safety

Flash floods occur when water levels rise rapidly along a stream or low-lying area and are among the most frequent and costly of natural disasters.



BEFORE:

- o **Talk about floods.** Spend time with your family discussing why floods occur, and what to do if flooding happens in your area.
- o **Have an emergency kit.** In an event of a flood, you may need to evacuate immediately. Prepare for at least 3-5 days, since most floods recede within that amount of time.
- o **Consider flood insurance.** Standard homeowners insurance doesn't cover flood damage. For information on flood insurance, visit FloodSmart.gov.
- o **Stay informed.** Use a NOAA Weather Radio or listen to a local station on a portable, battery-powered radio or television. Listen for and respond to flood watches and warnings. Evacuate if told to do so, or if you feel unsafe.



DURING:

- o **Follow guidance from local authorities.** Local authorities, such as elected officials and first responders, are most informed about affected areas and most knowledgeable of which flooded areas to avoid.
- o **Move to higher ground.** Avoid standing, flowing or rising water.
- o **Keep children away from dirty water.** Keep children and pets away from hazardous sites and floodwater, as it's likely to be dirty, carry bacteria and be vulnerable to electric shock.
- o **Wash hands frequently.** Bathe after being exposed to flood waters or flood-damaged areas.



AFTER:

- o **Ensure utilities are restored.** Check that utilities such as electricity and plumbing are restored to working order and that living and learning spaces (e.g., homes, schools, child care facilities) are free from physical and environmental hazards.
- o **Clean or discard contaminated items.** Materials that cannot be readily disinfected should be thrown out.

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For more tips for staying safe during a flood, visit HealthierHawaii.org.