**Preparing for Floods and Flash Floods**

Some simple advance preparation will help you be ready for possible floods in your area.

1. Know the flood warning system in your community, and be sure your family knows the warning. Instruct them in emergency procedures during a flood warning. If you live in an area subject to frequent or sudden floods, especially flash floods, you may wish to have family flood drills. Assign each family member an emergency task, such as gathering emergency supplies, turning off utilities, monitoring weather websites, or listening to the radio for instructions.
   1. Up-to-date weather advisories and warnings can be accessed at [weather.gov](https://www.weather.gov/). Clicking on a region, e.g. Central Indiana, will zoom to that location on the map.
   2. The U.S. Geological Survey maintains hundreds of stream monitoring stations throughout the country. Current streamflow data for Indiana, including projected flooding levels and crests for most waterways, can be found at [waterdata.usgs.gov/in/nwis/rt](https://waterdata.usgs.gov/in/nwis/rt).
2. Always keep fuel in your car - at least half a tank or enough for 100 miles. If electricity is cut off, gasoline pumps may not operate.
3. Keep on hand emergency supplies. Visit [INPREPared.org](https://extension.purdue.edu/INPREPared/) to access printable “Go-Bag” checklists that will assist in your preparations for floods and other disasters.
   1. Battery powered radio and extra batteries m case of power failure
   2. Basic first aid items such as bandages, antiseptics, blankets, first aid handbook, and any special medicines (such as insulin) for family members
   3. A supply of nonperishable foods requiring little or no cooking, and no refrigeration. The supply should be large enough to keep your family and pets at least 3 to 4 days.
   4. Can opener
   5. Emergency cooking equipment such as a camp stove
   6. Flashlights and/or LED lanterns with spare batteries; candles, candleholders, dry matches
   7. A minimum of two quarts of water per person a day (a gallon is better). Store drinking water in a clean bathtub and various containers. The water supply should be enough to last your family and pets for at least 3 or 4 days.
   8. Materials like sandbags, lumber, plastic sheeting, hand tools, wire, ropes, fire extinguishers
   9. Extra fuel for your automobile stored in an approved container
   10. Extra blankets
   11. Sanitary facilities. An emergency toilet can be constructed from any watertight container with a snug-fitting lid (such as a 5-gallon bucket). Keep chlorine bleach or lime on hand to help eliminate odors.
   12. Water purification tablets, chlorine bleach or 2% iodine to purify water
4. "Flood-proof" your buildings:
   1. Install check valves in sewer traps to prevent water from backing up in sewer drains.
   2. Seal cracks in walls and floors with hydraulic cement.
   3. Place heavy screens over lower windows to prevent breakage from floating objects.
   4. Be ready to protect appliances from minor flooding. Place a concrete half-block under each corner of refrigerators, freezers, washing machines and dryers. Use bricks or boards if you don't have concrete blocks.

**Fire hazards**

During a flood, fire danger is increased. In addition. fire departments may be unable to get to fires through high water.

Watch for these fire hazards on your property:

1. Broken or leaking gas lines
2. Flooded electrical circuits
3. Submerged furnaces or electrical appliances
4. Flammable or explosive materials coming from upstream

Before floodwaters crest, turn off the main power switch if you think the electrical circuits are going to be under water. NEVER TOUCH THE SWITCH WHILE YOU ARE WET OR STANDING IN WATER. Do not turn the electrical system back on until it has been inspected by an electrician.