CDC Floodwater messaging

Topline messages about flooding (also available in Spanish):

Floodwater Safety

Floodwater and standing water can be dangerous and can make you vulnerable to infectious diseases, chemical hazards, and injuries.

If flooding occurs:

- Get to higher ground. Get out of areas subject to flooding. This includes dips, low spots, canyons, washes, etc.
- Do not stay in the attic of your home. If the highest floor of your home becomes dangerous, get on the roof. Call 911 for help and stay on the line until the call is answered.

Stay Out of Floodwater

Floodwater can contain many things that may be harmful. We don't know exactly what is in floodwater at any given point in time. It is important to protect yourself from exposure to floodwater regardless of the source of contamination. The best way to protect yourself is to stay out of the water.

- Do not allow children to play in flooded areas.
- Do not allow children to play with toys that have been contaminated by floodwater and have not been disinfected.
- Do not bathe in water that may be contaminated with sewage or toxic chemicals. This includes rivers, streams, or lakes that are contaminated by floodwater.

If you come in contact with floodwater:

- Wash the area with soap and clean water as soon as possible. If you don't have soap or water, use alcohol-based wipes or sanitizer.
- Take care of wounds and seek medical attention if necessary.
- Wash clothes contaminated with flood or sewage water in hot water and detergent before reusing them.

Don't Drive in Flooded Areas

- Don't drive in flooded areas—cars or other vehicles won't protect you from floodwater. They can be swept away or may stall in moving water.
- Floodwater can pose a drowning risk for everyone— regardless of their ability to swim. Swiftly moving shallow water can be deadly, and even shallow standing water can be dangerous for small children.
- Always follow warnings about flooded roads.

Web sites:

Preparing for Floods | Floods | CDC

Safety Guidelines: Floodwater | Floods | CDC

Safety Guidelines: Reentering Your Flooded Home | Floods | CDC

Guidelines for Septic and Onsite Wastewater Systems | Floods | CDC

Full messaging document (Flood safety page is p15, but there is also detailed information on other pages about food and water safety after floods, mold, and other flood-related concerns)

Preparedness and Safety Messaging for Hurricanes, Flooding, and Similar Disasters, Second Edition (cdc.gov)

Mensajes de preparación y seguridad respecto a huracanes, inundaciones y desastres similares, segunda edición (cdc.gov)

Printable materials:

Communication Resources | Natural Disasters | CDC

Generator Safety Fact Sheet | Carbon Monoxide Poisoning | CDC

PSAs about Flooding: Public Service Announcements (PSAs) for Disasters | Natural Disasters | CDC

Never Drive Through Flooded Areas Never drive through flooded areas.

Floodwater Safety Know the hazards of flood water

Floodwaters Contain Many Things That May Harm Health This public service announcement provides information on the dangers of floodwater.

Stay Safe During a Flood Public Service Announcement about avoiding drowning in a flood

Social:
We will be sharing social media over @CDCgov, @CDCEnvironment and geo-targeted messages on the CDC Facebook page.