



FLOODING – WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW...

What is a Flood?

A **flood** is the most common hazard in the United States. It is an overflow of water that can happen during many weather conditions. Floods are defined as a natural disaster that can damage homes, properties and communities. They are caused by many things, including rainstorms, slow water run-off, earthquakes, broken dams or hurricanes. Floods are long term events and may last a week or longer.

What is a Flash Flood?

A **flash flood** is a rapid and swift unexpected flood of water that sweeps debris and anything in its path. They can occur within a few minutes or hours of excessive rainfall or a dam failure. Most of the flash floods that occur within Prince George's County are caused by:

- ✓ Slow moving thunderstorms
- ✓ Thunderstorms repeatedly moving over the same area
- ✓ Heavy rains from hurricanes and tropical storms

Flooding: Automobiles and Roadways

- Flash Floods can roll boulders, knock down trees and destroy buildings and bridges.
- 2-feet of water will float your car; 6-inches of fast moving floodwater can knock you off your feet; never try to walk, swim or drive through swift water.
- If you come upon floodwaters, STOP, TURN AROUND and GO ANOTHER WAY, Never drive through a flooded roadway.
- If your vehicle stalls in a flooded roadway, turn-on your headlights and emergency flashers. Abandon your vehicle immediately, stay nearby and seek higher ground.
- Always obey traffic signals and signage; related to flooding. Never drive through barricades or low water crossing.
- Be observant at night, especially when traveling on unfamiliar roads.



Flash Flood or Flood Watch

A “flood watch” means that the National Weather Service (NWS) is advising that conditions exist where a flood is possible. A “flash Flood Watch” advises that conditions exist for flooding to occur without warning – Be Alert and listen for Watch areas on your local television or radio stations.

Flash Flood or Flood Warning

A “flood warning” means that the National Weather Service (NWS) is indicating that flash floods are pending and/or about to occur in nearby or surrounding areas. A “flash Flood Warning” indicates flooding is occurring and you should seek immediate safety.

Stay informed about flooding by listening to your National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio, commercial radio and television for the latest flash flood/flood watches, warning and advisories.