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## Practicing Driving Safety During Floods

Floods are one of the scariest weather disasters. They destroy everything in their path from cars to houses. When the water reaches flood level, it is most often impossible to escape. People drown in floods every year because they are unable to make it to higher ground.

If a flood warning is in effect, make sure to gather the necessary supplies. Include items such as:

- Flashlights and extra batteries
- Portable battery-operated radio and extra batteries
- A first aid kit and manual
- Food and plenty of bottled water
- A non-electric can opener
- Necessary medications
- Cash and credit cards
- Identification
- Very sturdy shoes

Heed the warnings. Get to a safe place as soon as possible. You are better off safe than sorry.

### Don't Drive

There is one place that is very bad to be during a flood: your car. About 50% of flood-related deaths are people who are driving or trying to move a stalled car. If a flood is coming, your best bet is to get to higher ground as early as possible. If it comes down to it, choose to stay in your house rather than drive somewhere else. Go to the attic of the top floor and wait until water levels have lowered.

### If You're Driving When a Flood Hits

Ideally you should not be driving during a flood. As soon as a flood watch is in effect, you should seek the nearest shelter. If you do find yourself in your car, stay calm and realize that your life is worth more than the safety of your vehicle.

Never attempt to drive through a flood. The apparent depth of the water can be deceptive. It is easy to waterlog your car by trying to drive through what appears to be just a puddle. The water can easily stall the engine, engulf the vehicle, and sweep you away. If you come upon a flooded area, turn back and find an alternate route.



If your car does become surrounded by water, exit the car immediately. The water will act with great force on your car and can slam it into other objects, like a tree or bridge. Being inside your car when floodwaters hit is like being in a car crash, except that you have absolutely no control over your vehicle. Do not attempt to move or restart your car. It is virtually impossible in floodwaters.

Many people die in floods because they try to save their cars. Don't let it be you. Just get yourself to higher ground.

-- Bailey Stoler

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