

## Why should I worry about flooded roads?

- Whether the flooding is caused by snow melt or heavy rain, you should ***be cautious when driving or walking in flood-susceptible areas*** because:
  - ◆ As little as six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet.
  - ◆ Two feet of floodwater can float your car.
  - ◆ Water moving at 2 mph is capable of sweeping a car off a road or bridge.
- ***Avoid flood-susceptible areas***, especially low-lying streets where water commonly pools. Never attempt to walk or drive through a water-covered roadway, and beware of rising, swift-moving water.
- ***If you are driving and come upon rapidly rising waters, turn around and find another route.*** If your route is blocked by barricades, find another route. Barricades are put up by state or local officials to protect travelers from unsafe roads. Driving around them can be a serious risk.
- The road may be washed out below the water surface. Your vehicle may stall or get stuck in the water, and then get pushed off the road. Once off the road, vehicles often start to roll, making escape difficult or impossible.



- Many flood-related deaths in the United States are the result of an attempt to move a stalled vehicle.

## What actions can I take before the flood?

- Nearly one-half of all flash flood fatalities are vehicle-related. **Follow these safety rules** to protect yourself and others:

- ◆ **Listen to your radio, TV or National Weather Service radio** for the latest information on weather conditions that can cause flooding.
- ◆ **If flooding occurs, move to higher ground as quickly as possible.** You will not be able to outrun the flood.
- ◆ **Never park your vehicle along streams, if there is a threat of flooding.**
- ◆ **Be especially cautious at night** when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.



- **Be prepared –**

- ◆ **Make sure you have enough fuel in your vehicle for an emergency evacuation.**
- ◆ **Learn the safest route from your home or place of business to safe, high ground** should you have to evacuate in a hurry.
- ◆ **Have a “Go Bag” packed in the event of an evacuation.** Contents should include:
  - ◆ Copies of your important documents in a waterproof and portable container (insurance cards, photo IDs, proof of address, etc.)
  - ◆ Extra set of car and house keys
  - ◆ Credit and ATM cards and cash
  - ◆ Bottled water and nonperishable food, such as energy or granola bars
  - ◆ Flashlight and battery-operated AM/FM radio with extra batteries
  - ◆ Medications and first aid kit
  - ◆ Child care supplies or other special care items

## What should I know if I need to travel in flooded areas?

Nobody can stop a flood. But there are actions travelers can take before and during a flood to protect themselves, their families and property.

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) offers the following safety tips for travelers:

### ➤ **Stay tuned:**

- ◆ **Listen to your radio, TV or National Weather Service radio** for the latest information on weather conditions that can cause flooding.

### ➤ **Avoid flooded areas:**

- ◆ **Avoid flood-susceptible areas**, especially low-lying streets where water commonly pools.
- ◆ **Never attempt to walk or drive through water covered or flooded roadways, and beware of rising, swift-moving water.** Two feet of water can carry away most automobiles. Road beds may be washed out under flood waters.
- ◆ **“Turn Around Don’t Drown®.”** Never drive around barriers that warn you the road is flooded – turn around and find another route. If your route is blocked by barricades, find another route. Barricades are put up by state or local officials to protect travelers from unsafe roads. Driving around them can be a serious risk.
- ◆ **Leave your vehicle immediately and seek higher ground** if your vehicle is suddenly caught in rising water.

### ➤ **Help others:**

- ◆ **If you see a non-barricaded, water-covered roadway or major obstruction**, such as a blocked culvert or bridge opening, **call the local law enforcement agency** so they can alert the appropriate road agency.
- ◆ **Warn children to not play near swollen creeks or rivers, storm drains, culverts and bridges, or on flooded streets and roadways.**

## Driving Flood Facts

- **DO NOT DRIVE THROUGH FLOODED AREAS...**even if it looks shallow enough to cross.
- Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars causing loss of control and possible stalling.
- A foot of water will float many vehicles. Water only one foot deep can displace 1500 lbs!

- Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and pick-ups.
- Roadways concealed by floodwaters may not be intact.
- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have recently receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- The large majority of deaths due to flash flooding are due to people driving through flooded areas.

### What should I know when returning to areas affected by flooding?

- The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) offers the following tips and precautions:
  - ◆ **Stay tuned to local news organizations** for important announcements, bulletins and instructions.
  - ◆ **You may not have immediate access to your home.** Roads could be blocked, power lines could be down and persons may be in need of assistance.
  - ◆ **Make sure that you have current identification.** You may have to pass through identification checkpoints before being allowed access to your home/neighborhood.
  - ◆ **Avoid sight-seeing or entering a storm-affected area unnecessarily.**
  - ◆ Many roads may still have standing water. **Do not attempt to drive through floodwaters.** Remember the slogan, “**Turn Around, Don’t Drown®**,” as there could be unseen dangers, such as debris or a washed out roadway.
  - ◆ **Do not drive past barricades.** Many water rescues have been caused by motorists ignoring these warnings. The Kansas DOT will remove barriers after inspecting roadways and bridges to make sure they are safe, and clearing any debris.



## Why do I need to know about flooding and road-related hazards?

- **More fatalities occur in the United States each year due to flooding than from any other thunderstorm-related hazard** because people underestimate the force and power of water. Many of the deaths occur in automobiles as they are swept downstream. Of these drownings, many are preventable, but too many people continue to drive around the barriers that warn you the road is flooded.
- **When water covers the road, you will not know if the roadway is safe or the depth of the water.**
- **If you are driving or walking and you come to a flooded road**, the best option for you is to “Turn Around Don’t Drown®.”

## What flood-related terms should I know?

- Flash Flood/Flood **Watch**: **Flash flooding or flooding is possible** within the designated WATCH area ... be alert.
- Flash Flood/Flood **Warning**: **Flash flooding or flooding has been reported or is imminent. Take necessary precautions at once.**
- Urban and Small Stream **Advisory**: **Flooding** of small streams, streets and low-lying areas **is occurring**.
- Flash Flood/Flood **Statement**: **Provides follow-up information.**

## What is the “Turn Around Don’t Drown®” program?

The national “Turn Around Don’t Drown®” program was developed by the National Weather Service (NWS) to educate motorists traveling throughout the country about the importance of driving safely near flooded roads.



The NWS wants to build momentum across the nation to make individuals aware of the dangers on or near flood areas.

Each year hundreds of people lose their lives or are injured in flood-related incidents, and the “Turn Around Don’t Drown” program’s goal is to prevent such injuries and fatalities.

The Kansas DOT is partnering in this safety program.

If you have any questions regarding the “Turn Around Don’t Drown” program, visit the NWS Web’s site at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/srh/tadd/>.

