

## **Instructions for Safeguarding Against Floods**

### **A. General Information and Definitions**

The Meteorological Department, issues flood forecasts and warnings when rainfall is enough to cause low lying areas to flood.

Flood warnings are forecasts of impending floods, and are distributed to the public by radio and television and through local government emergency message systems. The warning message tells the expected severity of flooding (minor, moderate, or major), the areas likely to be impacted, and when flooding will begin. Careful preparations and prompt response will reduce property loss and ensure personal safety.

Flash flood warnings are the most urgent type of flood warnings issued, and are also transmitted to the public over radio and television.

### **B. Suggested Flood Safety Instructions for Citizens**

#### **I. Before the flood:**

- a. Find out how many feet your property is above or below possible flood levels so when predicted flood levels are broadcast, you can determine if you may be flooded. Also ask for the location of the nearest safe area.
- b. Keep a stock of food which requires little cooking and no refrigeration; electric power may be interrupted.
- c. Keep a portable radio, emergency cooking equipment, lights and flashlights in working order.
- d. Keep first-aid and critical medical supplies (prescriptions, insulin, etc.) at hand.
- e. Keep your automobile fueled; if electric power is cut off, fueling stations may not be able to operate pumps for several days.
- f. Keep materials like sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting, and lumber handy for emergency waterproofing.

#### **II. When you receive a flood warning:**

- a. Store drinking water in closed, clean containers. Water service may be interrupted.

- b. If flooding is likely, and time permits, move essential items, containers and furniture to upper floors of your house, or elevate them as best as possible.
- c. If forced or advised to leave your home, move to a safe area before access is cut off by flood water.
  
- b. Cut off all electrical circuits at the fuse panel or disconnect switch. If this is not possible, turn off or disconnect all electrical appliances. Shut off the water service and gas valves in your home.

III. During the flood:

- a. Avoid areas subject to sudden flooding.
- b. Do not attempt to cross a flowing stream where water is above your knees.
- c. Do not attempt to drive over a flooded road. You can be stranded or trapped.
- d. If your vehicle stalls, abandon it immediately and seek higher ground. Many people drown while trying to rescue their car.

IV. After the floods:

- a. Do not use fresh food that has come in contact with flood waters.
- b. Test drinking water for portability; wells should be pumped out and the water tested before drinking.
- c. Do not visit disaster area; your presence will likely hamper rescue and other emergency operations.
- d. Do not handle live electrical equipment in wet areas; electrical equipment should be checked and dried before returning to service.
- e. Use flashlights, not lanterns or torches, to examine buildings; flammables may be inside.
- f. Report broken utility lines to police, fire or other appropriate authorities.

- g. Stay tuned to your radio or television stations for advice and instructions of your local government on:
  - (i) where to go to obtain necessary medical care in your area;
  - (ii) where to go for emergency assistance such as housing, clothing, food, etc.
  - (iii) ways to help yourself and your community recover from the emergency.