

What to do after a flood

- Listen to radio, TV or NOAA Weather Radio. Wait until an area is declared safe before entering.
- If you come upon a barricade or a flooded road, Turn Around Don't Drown!™
- Stay on firm ground. Moving water only 6 inches deep can sweep you off your feet.
- Standing water may be electrically charged from power lines.
- Check gas, water and electrical lines and appliances for damage.
- Never use candles or other open flames indoors.
- Do not drink or prepare food with tap water until officials say it is safe.



Flash flood in Las Cruces, NM, 2006
Photo from City of Las Cruces Public Works Department

Information on preparing for floods and flash floods and what should be included in a family disaster preparedness kit is found at:

www.ready.gov

For More Information

Please contact the following agencies for more information about protecting your family from natural hazards:

Doña Ana County Local Emergency Planning Committee

www.donaanalepc.org

Office of Emergency Management
www.donaanacounty.org/emergency
(575) 647-7900
1170 North Solano, Suite O
Las Cruces, NM 88001

Doña Ana County Flood Commission
www.donaanacounty.org/flood
(575) 525-5558

Elephant Butte Irrigation District
www.ebid-nm.org
(575) 526-6671

City of Las Cruces Public Works Dept.
www.las-cruces.org/Departments/public%20works.aspx
(575) 528-3131

NM Department of Transportation
Roadway Conditions
<http://www.nmroads.com>
1-800-432-4269

National Weather Service El Paso/Santa Teresa
www.srh.noaa.gov/epz

American Red Cross
Southwest New Mexico Chapter
www.redcrossnewmexico.org

Unless otherwise noted, the information in this brochure has been adapted from NOAA's National Weather Service, the American Red Cross, and the Doña Ana County Flood Commission.

January 2012



Flash Floods

NATURAL HAZARDS Of Southern New Mexico

Prepared by the Natural Hazards Committee

Flash Floods

Prepare a Family Disaster Plan

- Check to see if you have insurance that covers flooding. If not, find out how to get flood insurance.
- Keep insurance policies, documents, and other valuables in a safe-deposit box.
- Identify where you could go if told to evacuate. Choose several places such as a friend's home in another town, a motel, or a shelter.

FLASH FLOOD WATCH
means flash flooding is possible in your area.
FLASH FLOOD WARNING
means a flash flood is occurring or will occur *very* soon.

**If you are told to leave,
do so immediately!
Take your evacuation kit:**

- First aid kit
- Medicine, prescriptions
- Baby food and diapers
- Games, books, music players with headphones
- Toiletries
- Battery-powered radio and cell phone
- Flashlights

- Extra batteries
- A blanket or sleeping bag for each person
- Identification
- Copies of key papers such as insurance policies or cards
- Cash, credit cards

Do you really know how deep and fast the water is?

People often underestimate the force of water. Most vehicles, including SUVs and trucks, lose contact with the road in 6 inches of water and can be swept away in 18-24 inches of water. More than half of all flood-related deaths are vehicle-related. Of these, most are preventable.

- Do not attempt to cross flowing arroyos or water courses.
 - Road beds may be washed out or undercut by flood waters.
 - Flooded roadways may conceal debris or sinkholes.
 - Do not drive around barricades.

- If your car stalls in rapidly rising waters, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground.
- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.

**Turn Around.
Don't Drown.™**

- Although it may not be raining at your home, flooding can be caused by rain falling several miles upstream, and then moving downstream rapidly.
- The construction of buildings, highways, and parking lots increases runoff by reducing the amount of rain absorbed by the ground.
- Be aware of any dams upstream of your location. If flooding occurs, move to higher ground.
- During periods of heavy rainfall, storm drains may become overwhelmed and flood roads and buildings.



Placitas Arroyo overtops Channel Road, Hatch, NM, 2002; Photo by Hatch resident