

# EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

*How you can prepare*

	HEAT	COLD	FLOODING
<b>What is it?</b>	Extreme heat is defined as a long period (2 to 3 days) of high heat and humidity with temperatures above 90 degrees.	Winter storms and blizzards can bring extreme cold, freezing rain, snow, ice, and high winds.	Flooding is a temporary overflow of water onto land that is normally dry. Floods are the most common natural disaster in the United States.
<b>Who's at risk?</b>	Older adults, children, and sick or overweight individuals are at greater risk.	Older adults, children, and sick individuals are at greater risk.	Anyone who lives, works, or spends time in a Flood Hazard Area.
<b>How to prepare in advance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find places in your community where you can go to get cool.</li> <li>• Keep your home cool by doing the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cover windows with drapes or shades.</li> <li>- Weather-strip doors and windows.</li> <li>- Use window reflectors, such as aluminum foil-covered cardboard, to reflect heat back outside.</li> <li>- Add insulation to keep the heat out.</li> <li>- Use attic fans to clear hot air.</li> <li>- Install window air conditioners and insulate around them.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Learn to recognize the signs of heat-related illness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare your home to keep out the cold with insulation, caulking, and weather stripping.</li> <li>• Learn how to keep pipes from freezing.</li> <li>• Install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery back-ups.</li> <li>• Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of freezing weather and winter storms.</li> <li>• Sign up for your community's warning system.</li> <li>• Gather supplies in case you need to stay home for several days without power. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Do not forget the needs of pets.</li> <li>• Have extra batteries for radios and flashlights.</li> <li>• Create an emergency supply kit for your car. Include jumper cables, sand, a flashlight, warm clothes, blankets, bottled water, and non-perishable snacks. Keep the gas tank full.</li> <li>• Learn the signs of, and basic treatments for, frostbite and hypothermia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know types of flood risk in your area. Visit FEMA's Flood Map Service Center for information.</li> <li>• Sign up for Arlington Alerts (Arlington's community warning system).</li> <li>• If flash flooding is a risk in your location, then monitor potential signs, such as heavy rain.</li> <li>• Learn and practice evacuation routes, shelter plans, and flash flood response.</li> <li>• Gather supplies in case you have to leave immediately, or if services are cut off. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Don't forget the needs of pets.</li> <li>• Obtain extra batteries and charging devices for phones and other critical equipment.</li> <li>• Purchase or renew a flood insurance policy.</li> <li>• Keep important documents in a water-proof container. Create password-protected digital copies.</li> <li>• Protect your property. Move valuables to higher levels. Declutter drains and gutters. Install check valves. Consider a sump pump with a battery.</li> </ul>

*Information adapted from Ready ([www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)), a website of the Department of Homeland Security designed to help people plan ahead for disasters.*



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# HEAT

# COLD

# FLOODING

## How to respond during an event

- Never leave a child, adult, or animal alone inside a vehicle on a warm day.
- Find places with air conditioning. Libraries, malls, and community centers can provide a cool place to escape the heat.
- If you're outside, find shade. Wear a hat wide enough to protect your face.
- Wear loose, lightweight clothing.
- Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated. If you or someone you care for is on a special diet, ask a doctor how best to accommodate it.
- Do not use electric fans when the temperature outside is more than 95 degrees, as this could increase the risk of heat-related illness.
- Avoid high-energy activities.
- Check yourself, family, and neighbors for signs of heat-related illness.

- Stay off roads if at all possible. If trapped in your car, then stay inside.
- Limit your time outside. If you need to go outside, then wear layers of warm clothing. Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.
- Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Only use generators and grills outdoors and away from windows. Never heat your home with a gas stovetop or oven.
- Reduce the risk of a heart attack. Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow.
- Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia and begin treatment right away.
- Check on neighbors. Older adults and young children are more at risk in extreme cold.

- Depending on where you are and the warning time of flooding, go to the safe location that you previously identified.
- If told to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Respect barricades. Local responders use them to safely direct traffic out of flooded areas.
- Listen to local alerting systems for emergency information and instructions.
- Do not walk, swim, or drive through flood waters. Turn Around. Don't Drown!
- Stay off bridges over fast-moving water.
- If your vehicle is trapped in rapid water, then stay inside. If water is rising inside the vehicle, seek refuge on the roof.
- If trapped in a building, then go to its highest level, but do not climb into a closed attic. Go on the roof only if necessary. Once there, signal for help.

## What you should watch out for

**HEAT CRAMPS:** Muscle pains or spasms in the stomach, arms, or legs. Go to a cooler location. Remove excess clothing. Sip on cool sports drinks with salt and sugar. Get medical help if cramps last more than an hour.

**HEAT EXHAUSTION:** Heavy sweating, paleness, muscle cramps, tiredness, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea, vomiting, or fainting. Go to an air-conditioned place and lie down. Loosen or remove clothing. Take a cool bath. Sip on cool sports drinks with salt and sugar. Get medical help if symptoms get worse or last more than an hour.

**HEAT STROKE:** Body temperature above 103 degrees; red, hot, and dry skin with no sweat; rapid, strong pulse; dizziness; confusion; or unconsciousness. Call 911 or get the person to a hospital immediately. Cool down with whatever methods are available until medical help arrives.

**FROSTBITE:** Loss of feeling and color around the face, fingers, and toes. Signs are numbness, white or grayish-yellow skin, firm or waxy skin. Go to a warm room. Soak in warm water. Use body heat to warm. Do not massage or use a heating pad.

**HYPOTHERMIA:** an unusually low body temperature. A temperature below 95 degrees is an emergency. Signs are shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, or drowsiness. Go to a warm room. Warm the center of the body first—chest, neck, head, and groin. Keep dry and wrapped up in warm blankets, including the head and neck.

## AFTER THE EVENT:

- Listen to authorities for information and instructions. Return home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Wear heavy gloves and boots during clean up.
- Be aware of the risk of electrocution. Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water.
- Avoid wading in floodwater, which can contain dangerous debris, contamination, and downed power lines.
- Use a generator or other gasoline-powered machinery ONLY outdoors and away from windows.

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