# Floods

## What should I do?

- Listen to area radio and television stations and a NOAA Weather Radio for possible flood warnings and reports of flooding in progress or other critical information from the National Weather Service (NWS). Link to real-time stream and river gage
- Be prepared to evacuate at a moment's notice.
- When a flood or flash flood warning is issued for your area, head for higher ground and stay there.
- Stay away from floodwaters. If you come upon a flowing stream where water is above your ankles, stop, turn around and go another way. Six inches of swiftly moving water can sweep you off of your feet.
- If you come upon a flooded road while driving, turn around and go another way. If you are caught on a flooded road and waters are rising rapidly around you, get out of the car quickly and move to higher ground. Most cars can be swept away by less than two feet of moving water.
- Keep children out of the water. They are curious and often lack judgment about running water or contaminated water.
- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood danger.
- Because standard homeowners insurance doesn't cover flooding, it's important to have protection from the floods associated with hurricanes, tropical storms, heavy rains and other conditions that impact the U.S. For more information on flood insurance, please visit the National Flood Insurance Program Web site at www.FloodSmart.gov.

## What do I do after a flood?

- Return home only when officials have declared the area safe.
- Before entering your home, look outside for loose power lines, damaged gas lines, foundation cracks or other damage.
- Parts of your home may be collapsed or damaged. Approach entrances carefully. See if porch roofs and overhangs have all their supports.
- Watch out for wild animals, especially poisonous snakes that may have come into your home with the floodwater.
- If you smell natural or propane gas or hear a hissing noise, leave immediately and call the fire department.
- If power lines are down outside your home, do not step in puddles or standing water.

- Keep children and pets away from hazardous sites and floodwater.
- Materials such as cleaning products, paint, batteries, contaminated fuel and damaged fuel containers are hazardous. Check with local authorities for assistance with disposal to avoid risk.
- During cleanup, wear protective clothing, including rubber gloves and rubber boots.
- Make sure your food and water are safe. Discard items that have come in contact with floodwater, including canned goods, water bottles, plastic utensils and baby bottle nipples. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Do not use water that could be contaminated to wash dishes, brush teeth, prepare food, wash hands, make ice or make baby formula.

Contact your local or state public health department for specific recommendations for boiling or treating water in your area after a disaster as water may be The Red Cross urges all who have been affected by floods to use caution. Avoid walking or driving through flood waters. Even a shallow depth of fast-moving floodwater produces more force than most people imagine. If you are in a car and your vehicle stalls, abandon it immediately and seek higher ground. When returning home:

**Listen:** Follow the advice of local authorities.

**Be safe:** Avoid downed power lines and smell for gas when entering your home or office. Wear protective clothing like rubber gloves and boots when cleaning your home.

**"When in doubt, throw it out":** Dispose of food, beverages and medicine exposed to floodwaters and mud, including canned goods, capped bottles and sealed containers. Water may not be safe to drink, clean with, or bathe in after an emergency such as a flood. Use only bottled, boiled, or treated water until your water supply is tested and found safe. Read more in the Safe Food and Water brochure

**Get rid of mold:** Mold can cause asthma attacks or irritate your eyes, nose and skin. Remove all items that have been wet for more than 48 hours. To clean hard surfaces, use commercial cleaning products or a bleach solution of 1 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water. Please see fact sheet from CDC for more information

**Repairing your Home**: For more guidance on repairing your home, please refer to the guidelines in the Repairing your Flooded Home Brochure

**For additional information:**

- State Civil Defense
- Kauai County Civil Defense
- Department of Emergency Management
- Maui County Civil Defense
- Hawaii County Civil Defense
- FEMA