

March 2015

Emergency Preparedness Pointers

Keep Safe And Dry

Flood Safety Awareness Week is March 15-21 which is just in time to remind us all how to stay safe during the spring run-off and summer storms seasons. Flooding can occur along the Boise River, local creeks and in the foothills gulches. Frozen ground, clogged storm drains and construction can create flooding in areas far from traditional flooding sources. The National Weather Service (NWS) keeps the public informed about flooding and uses specific terms to do so. Be familiar with flood terminology, take action when necessary and stay safe. Here are some flood terms and their meanings from the NWS.



Speaking Of Flood



General River Flooding – follows heavy rain, snow melt or their combination. While river flooding typically occurs slowly and allows more time to take protective measures, extreme flash flooding or a breakup of an ice or debris jam along a river can produce more rapid river rises

Urban and Small Stream Floods – occurs when heavy rain falls, resulting in flooded streets, underpasses or drainage ditches in urban areas, and creeks in rural areas. Not usually life-threatening on its own, but can be, if motorists drive through a flooded roadway or children play near a storm drain or drainage ditch.

Flood Advisory: Be Aware! – A Flood Advisory is issued when flooding is not expected to be bad enough to issue a warning. However, it may cause significant inconvenience and, if caution is not exercised, it could lead to situations that may threaten life and/or property.

Flood Watch: Be Prepared! – A Flood Watch is issued when conditions are favorable for a flooding to occur. It does not mean flooding will occur, but it's possible.

Once a watch is issued, it is important to monitor local radio (including NOAA Weather radios), television, internet news sites and social media for information and updates. Sign up to receive weather warnings directly through text and email at the Idaho State Alert and Warning (ISAWS) site: <http://isaws.org/>

Flood Warning: Take Action! – A Flood Warning is issued when the hazardous weather event is imminent or already happening. Listen to Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages for weather updates and possible evacuation orders broadcast over radio and television. Prepare to evacuate if necessary.

Flash Flood Warning: Take Action! – A Flash Flood Warning is issued when a flash flood is imminent or occurring. If you are in a flood prone area move immediately to high ground. A flash flood is a sudden violent flood that can take from minutes to hours to develop. It is even possible to experience a flash flood in areas not immediately receiving rain.

In Ada County, emergency and evacuation notices may also be broadcast using a Community Mass Notification System. These messages will be received via phone. If your cell phone is registered with ISAWS, these messages will be sent to your cell phone along with any landline associated with your home address. Depending on how quick the onset of the hazard is, evacuation notices may be prioritized by area to reach those closest to the threat first. If there is not a landline telephone in the home, it is very important to register with ISAWS so that notifications will reach you in a timely manner.

Don't Get Carried Away

Every year, people make bad choices and drive around street barricades that say “ROAD FLOODED.” Don't be one of them; remember the NWS motto “Turn Around, Don't Drown!” Water may be deeper than it appears and can hold hidden dangers (i.e. sharp objects, washed out road surfaces, electrical wires, etc.). A vehicle entering swiftly moving water can be swept away quickly. Twelve inches of moving water can float a car and 18 inches or more of moving water can carry away large vehicles.

Keep dry by keeping a weather eye on the sky. Become a trained **Weather Spotter**. The next combined Ada/Canyon County class will be: **When: Thursday, March 19, 2015 from 7pm to 9pm**

Where: Meridian Library, 1326 W. Cherry Lane, Meridian—Large Conference Room



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