

Dept. of Military Affairs: ReadyWisconsin encourages everyone to be flood smart this spring

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MADISON, Wis. – Last year was the wettest year on record in Wisconsin for many counties, and there are signs that we could be in for more flooding in the state this spring. Gov. Tony Evers has declared March 16-20 Flood Safety Awareness Week in Wisconsin. ReadyWisconsin and the Department of Health Services are encouraging everyone to assess their flood risk and learn how to protect themselves before, during, and after a flood.

“Flooding causes millions of dollars in damage every year to private and public property in Wisconsin, destroying homes, roads, and farmers’ crops, said Wisconsin Emergency Management Administrator Darrell L. Williams, Ph.D. “That’s why planning ahead is so important. It protects lives and property.”

ReadyWisconsin offers the following tips on making you and your family flood safe:

- Stay up to date on the forecast – Identify multiple ways to receive alerts about dangerous weather conditions and potential flooding, such as a NOAA Weather Radio, trusted local news outlets, and mobile weather apps.
- “Turn Around, Don’t Drown” – Never drive or walk through flooded areas. Just six inches of fast-moving water can knock over an adult, while 12 inches can carry away a small car. Be especially careful while driving at night. Driving through floodwaters puts lives at risk, while more than half of flood fatalities are vehicle related. Flooding killed two people in Wisconsin in 2019.
- Know your flood risk – Do you live in a flood plain, have a basement, or live

- near a source of water? Examine the potential for flooding on your property. Plan with your family for what you will do if the floodwaters begin to rise.
- Protect your property – If you have gutters, make sure they are kept clean and the downspouts are directing water away from your foundation. Repair cracks in your foundation, improve grading so water flows away from your house, and cover window wells to keep water out.
 - Move valuables to higher ground – Never store anything in a basement that can't be replaced. Store important records and documents in waterproof containers.
 - Build a “Go Kit” –Include food, water, cash, medications and copies of important documents (medical records, insurance policies, and financial documents).
 - Make an emergency plan – If you can't make it home or need to leave quickly, identify a meeting place for your family. Make a list of emergency numbers and important contacts.
 - Purchase flood insurance – Standard insurance policies generally do not cover flooding. Most flood coverage requires 30 days to take effect. Find information at www.floodsmart.gov.

“Preparedness is key when dealing with any potential weather threat, but when it comes to floods, the health risks often increase once the water goes down,” said Jeanne Ayers, state health officer and administrator of the DHS Division of Public Health. “Mold, well contamination, and damage to property can occur, but there’s also a risk to our mental health during emergencies or their aftermath. DHS and our local and tribal health partners can help families be safe and healthy with tips on what to do before, during and after a flood.”

For more information on Flood Safety Awareness Week, and for safety information throughout the year, go to <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov>. DHS also has a toolkit with simple steps to protect yourself and your property before, during, and after a flood.

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Follow @DHSWI on Facebook, Twitter, and at dhs.wi on Instagram.

A copy of the governor’s proclamation can be viewed here.

[031620_Flood Safety Awareness Week.pdf](#)

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