



Office of
Emergency
Management

www.lakecountyfl.gov
352-343-9420

Learning About

FLOODS



LOCAL FLOOD HAZARD

Flooding in Lake County may be caused by heavy rainfall that occurs in short periods, as is common during seasonal storms. Tropical storms and hurricanes can also cause flooding not only along a coastline, but far inland as well. With Lake County's location between the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean and its low-lying areas, there is always a flood threat from heavy storms.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has identified portions of the County as a Special Flood Hazard Area on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps which can be found here: <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>. Residents of unincorporated Lake County can contact the Lake County Public Works Department at **352-253-9081** to request a flood determination document or email flood@lakecountyfl.gov. In addition, on-site visits and technical assistance are provided to residents who are experiencing problems in the areas of flooding and drainage. For more information, call the Lake County Stormwater Division at **352-253-9084**.

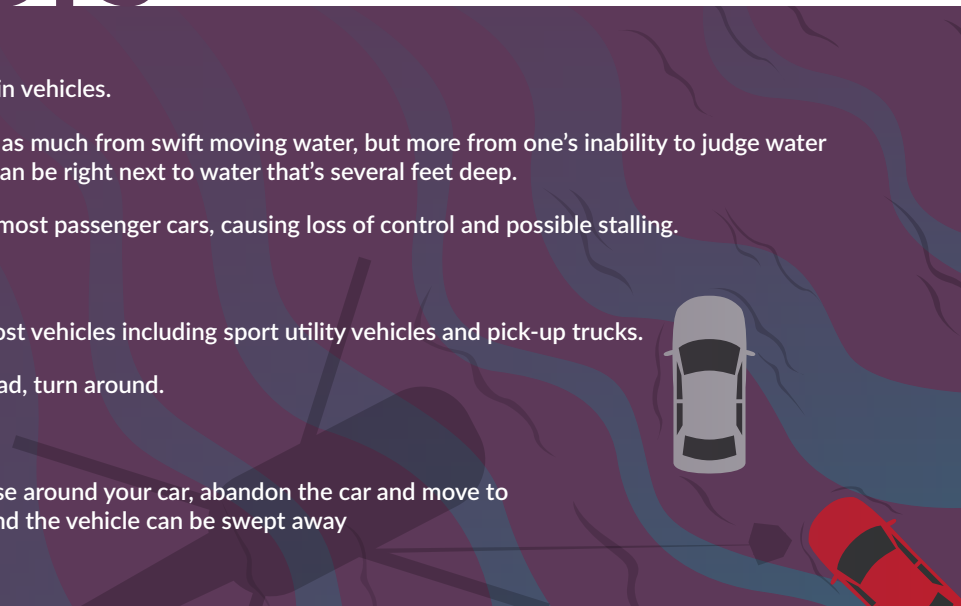
DRIVING FLOOD FACTS

- Almost half of all flash flood fatalities occur in vehicles.
- Pooling of water poses a significant risk, not as much from swift moving water, but more from one's inability to judge water depth. Water that's only a few inches deep can be right next to water that's several feet deep.
- Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars, causing loss of control and possible stalling.
- A foot of water will float many vehicles.
- Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including sport utility vehicles and pick-up trucks.
- If you come upon a barricaded or flooded road, turn around.
- Drive around flooded intersections.
- Do not drive in flood areas. If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground, if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle can be swept away

PREPARE YOUR HOME

There are many different reasons why a community may flood including storm surge, river flooding or heavy rainfall. Low-lying or poorly drained areas can also increase a community's flood risk. Due to the relatively flat terrain across Florida, it is complicated to drain accumulated water. When rivers rise, water tends to spread out far from riverbanks. Consider these tips to safeguard your home:

- Avoid building in a floodplain. If you are in a floodplain elevate and reinforce your home.
- Most standard home insurance policies do not cover flooding. Whether your home is in a floodplain or not, talk to your insurance agent about getting a flood insurance policy.
- Elevate the furnace, water heater and electric panel if susceptible to flooding.
- Install "check valves" in sewer traps to prevent floodwater from backing up into the drains of your home.
- Construct barriers (levees, berms, floodwalls) to stop floodwater from entering the building.
- Plan for the protection of pets and livestock.
- Elevate furniture above the flood protection level.
- Create floodway openings in non-habitable areas, such as garages.
- Seal off sewer lines to prevent the backflow of sewer water.
- Use sand bags to reduce erosion and prevent floodwaters from encroaching into structures.



DURING A FLOOD

- Listen to a battery-operated NOAA weather radio and news reports on television and AM/FM radio.
- Remember that a flood watch means flooding is possible. A flood warning means flooding is occurring or will occur soon; if advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Be aware of streams, drainage channels, canyons and other areas known to flood suddenly.
- Turn off utilities at the main switches or valves if instructed to do so. Disconnect electrical appliances. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.
- Do not walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.

AFTER A FLOOD

- Avoid floodwaters; water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline or sewage. Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
- Avoid moving water.
- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- Stay away from downed power lines and report them to the power company.
- Return home only when authorities indicate it is safe.
- Stay out of any building if it is surrounded by floodwaters.
- Use extreme caution when entering buildings; there may be hidden damage, particularly in foundations.
- Service damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits and leaching systems. Damaged sewage systems are serious health hazards.
- Clean and disinfect everything that got wet. Muddy floodwater can contain sewage and chemicals.
- Discard canned, bottled or sealed-in-plastic food items that have been dented or dislodged.
- Dangerous materials found in flooded homes may include pesticides, fuel oil, gasoline, chemicals and other substances that might have been brought in or spilled by floodwaters.