

# HOW TO SURVIVE A FLASH FLOOD

## IN A CAR



### **Watch cars in front of you.**

If you see drivers stalling, or notice water reaching halfway up car wheels, do not proceed.



### **Estimate the water depth.**

Water may be deeper than it appears. A car will stall (and float) in six inches of water. If you are unsure if a road is safe to drive through, get out of your car and check the water level using a stick.



### **Exit the vehicle immediately if the car stalls or begins to float.**

If the door will not open, crawl out the window (you may need to break a power window if the car's electronics become saturated).



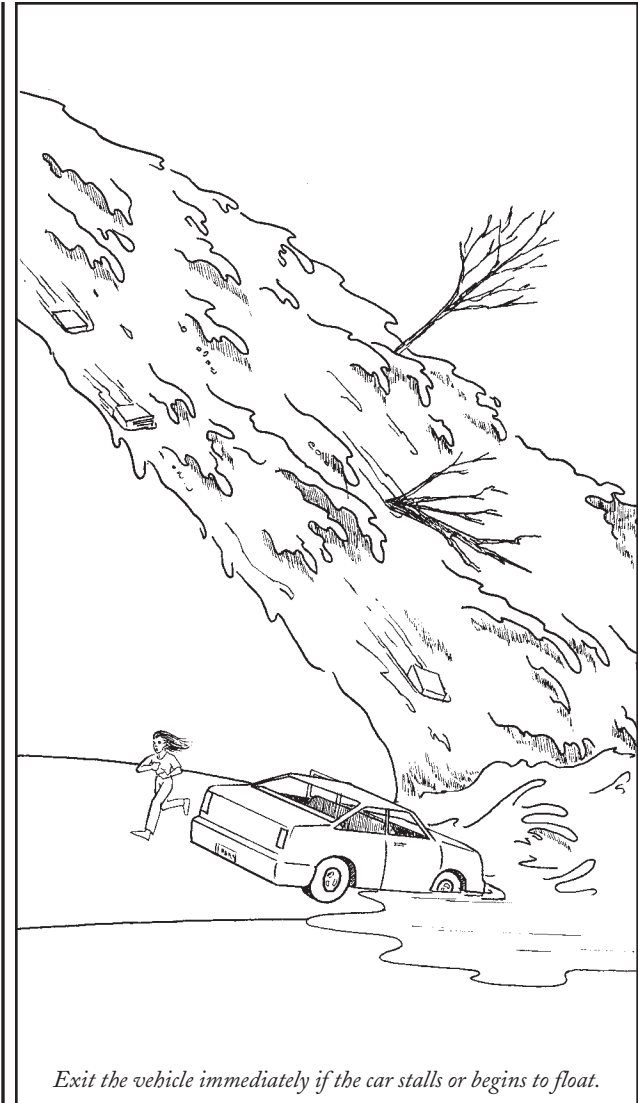
### **Walk or run to safety.**

Get to higher ground as fast as possible.



### **Float.**

If you are knocked off your feet by the rushing water, cover your head with your arms and attempt to float on your back, feet first, until you can grab a stationary object and climb to safety.



*Exit the vehicle immediately if the car stalls or begins to float.*

## At Home

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### Call for help.

When you see floodwaters heading toward your house, seek help. Because of the risk of electric shock, avoid using a wired telephone if there is water in the house. Use a cellular phone.



### Observe the water level.

If the water outside is less than six inches deep, and you are able to walk without falling down, move to higher ground. If walking is impossible, go back inside.



### Move to the highest floor.

If the house is three or more stories, move to a high floor. If the house is two stories or less, get on the roof.



### Signal rescuers.

Use a whistle, wave a white T-shirt or another piece of clothing, or shout to make your presence known. Continue to call for help until you are rescued or the waters recede.

## Be Aware

- If time permits, quickly gather these supplies and place them in a plastic bag: flashlight with spare batteries; battery-operated radio; first-aid kit; rope; whistle; gallon of water; bread, granola bars, or other nonperishable, high-carbohydrate

foodstuffs; essential medications. Take them with you when you leave your house.

- Do not eat or drink any foods that have been touched by floodwaters. The packaging may harbor dangerous germs or chemicals.
- When reentering a flooded building, wear boots and waders, and watch for snakes.
- Pump out flooded basements gradually (approximately one-third of the water per day) to avoid sudden structural damage.
- Have the property checked by a qualified structural engineer before moving back in.

## On Foot

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### Find a flotation device.

Put on a life jacket, inflate a pool toy, or grab a foam (not down or cotton) sofa cushion. Wood floats, but a large piece of furniture may be unwieldy and difficult to carry.



### Run.

Get to high ground or a high floor of a multistory building immediately. Avoid low-lying areas such as spillways, areas near storm drains, and creeks and riverbanks. Before crossing flooded open areas and streets, watch for floating objects (trees, cars, appliances) that might knock you down.



### **Check shallow water.**

If the water is less than six inches deep and not moving quickly, you should be able to walk quickly or run. The water level may rise quickly, however, and fast-moving water can knock you down. Prepare to move fast.



### **Move to the roof.**

If you are trapped by rising, fast-moving water and cannot get to higher ground, get on the roof of a two- or three-story house. Avoid the first and second floors, as these may become inundated quickly.

### **Be Aware**

Do not attempt to swim across floodwaters. Deep, quickly moving floodwaters will almost certainly overpower you and sweep you away. You will be unable to see large objects, such as trees, that may be carried by the water, and you may be struck by them.

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