

## **Flood Hazards and Safety Precautions**

Flooding can cause serious health hazards if appropriate steps are not taken to protect people and the environment. Floodwater, crops and garden land can be contaminated with sewage, pesticides, oil or chemical waste after a flooding event. The following are prevention and precaution tips to assist you after a flooding event.

- First and foremost do not drive through floodwaters. The water can be deeper than it appears. Remember, two feet of water can cause a car to be swept away.
- Before the flood, move all chemicals, such as pesticides, fertilizers, herbicides, etc. and store them in waterproof containers above flood levels.
- If your property is in danger of flooding move all garbage and refuse to higher ground.
- The longer water is allowed to stand after a flood the higher the risk of health problems from bacteria.
- Submerged gas control valves, circuit breakers, and fuses pose explosion and fire hazards, and should be replaced as the water subsides.
- Leaking propane tanks can cause a fire or explosion. If you are asked to evacuate your home or property, secure and shut off all propane tanks. When you return have a qualified professional turn the propane back on.
- Wear gloves and boots at all times to avoid skin contact with anything that has been contaminated by floodwaters.
- Children should never be allowed to play in floodwaters.
- Any of the following food items, exposed to flood waters, must be disposed of:
  - Food items in your refrigerator and freezer.
  - All boxed foods such as cereals, etc.
  - All bottled drinks and products in jars, including home preserves, since the area under the seal of the jars and bottles cannot be properly disinfected.
  - All medicines, cosmetics, and other toiletries.
- All undamaged canned goods must be thoroughly washed and disinfected.
- Cans with large dents and leaks must be disposed of.
- Wash and disinfect all dishes and utensils.
- If your home has been flooded do not attempt to turn the power back on, have all wiring inspected by an electrician.