

Stormy Weather

Stormy weather: A wonderful old song as well as the conditions many of us have to cope with during the year. Whether it comes in solid or liquid form, it is important to give due respect to the power of water. Torrential rains can quickly lead to dangerous conditions. Six inches of moving water can sweep a person off their feet or make driving difficult. Two feet of rushing water can sweep away a car or truck while a sheet of ice too thin to see can make it impossible to stop in time to avoid an accident.

Prepare for a flood: are you in a flood plain? What is the likelihood that your home or neighborhood will flood if heavy rains come? This information is key to knowing if you might have to evacuate or if you need to move important possessions from the basement, off the floor, or to higher stories.

Pay attention to the forecasts. Even though forecasts are sometime wrong, it is better to be over prepared than under. Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee have shown us that a storm need not be incredibly powerful to do immense damage. If you are directed to evacuate, do so. By failing to do so you may selfishly be putting others at risk if you wind up needing to be rescued.

In the Northeast we also have to accept the possibility of significant snow storms and blizzards. These bring their own hazards. Driving through snow and ice can be very dangerous and because of the cold just having car trouble in an out of the way area can be life threatening. In preparation for winter driving have your vehicle serviced and prepared for winter, have appropriate tires, and store extra warm clothing, flares, and a flashlight on board.

A major storm, whether rain or snow, can lead to the loss of utilities for extended periods. Always have several days' worth of non-perishable food and water on hand along with basic first aid supplies, flashlights, and a battery-powered radio.

A little planning and forethought can help you and your family survive even the worst that nature can throw at us.