Flood Safety

Do not walk through flowing water
Drowning is a major cause of flood deaths, mostly during flash floods. Use a pole or stick to make sure there is solid ground before navigating an area where the water is not flowing.

Do not drive through a flooded area
More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. If you come upon a road barrier, turn around and go another way; the road or bridge may be washed out.

Stay away from power lines and electrical wires
Electrocution is also a major killer in floods. Electrical current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to the Power Company or emergency services.

Turn off your electricity when you return home
Some appliances, such as television sets, can shock you even after they have been unplugged. Don't use appliances or motors that have gotten wet unless they have been taken apart, cleaned, and dried.

Watch for animals – especially snakes
Small animals that have been flooded out of their homes may seek shelter in yours. Use a pole or stick to poke and turn items over and scare away small animals.

Look before you step
After a flood, the ground and floors are covered with debris including broken bottles and nails. Floors and stairs that have been covered with mud can be very slippery.

Be alert for gas leaks
Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Don't smoke or use candles, lanterns, or open flames unless you know the gas has been turned off and the area has been ventilated.

Carbon monoxide exhaust kills
Use a generator or other gasoline-powered machine outdoors. The same goes for camping stoves. Fumes from charcoal are especially deadly – cook with charcoal only outdoors.

Clean everything that got wet
Floodwaters will pick up sewage and chemicals from roads, farms, factories, and storage buildings. Spoiled food and flooded cosmetics and medicine are health hazards. When in doubt, throw them out.

Take good care of yourself
Recovering from a flood is tough on both the body and the spirit. And the effects a disaster has on you and your family may last a long time. Consult a health professional on how to recognize and treat anxiety, stress, and fatigue.

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