

STAY AWAY & STAY ALIVE!

The Dangers of Flood Control Channels and Local Urban Rivers

Flash Floods, Mudslides and Debris Flows

What Can You Do If You Live Near or Are Visiting a Recently Burned Area?

Prior to Storms:

1. Watch the patterns of storm-water drainage near your home or area you are visiting. Note where runoff water converges, increasing flow in channels. These are places to avoid during a storm.
2. Contact local public safety authorities to learn about emergency-response and evacuation plans for your area. Develop an emergency plan for your family or business.

During a Storm:

1. Stay alert! Many flash flood, mudslide and debris flow fatalities occur when people are sleeping. Listen to the radio for warnings of intense rainfall. Be aware that intense bursts of rain may be particularly dangerous, especially after longer periods of heavy rainfall.
2. If you are in an area susceptible to flooding, mudslides and debris flow (or one that has experienced such events in the past), consider leaving if it is safe to do so. Remember that driving during heavy rainstorms can be hazardous.
3. If you are near a stream or a channel, listen for any unusual sounds that might indicate moving debris, such as trees cracking or boulders knocking together. A trickle of flowing mud or debris may precede larger flows. Be alert for sudden increases or decreases in water flow and for a change from clear to muddy water. Such changes may indicate debris-flow activity upstream, so be prepared to move quickly. Don't delay! Save yourself, not your belongings.
4. Keep in mind that rises in water levels during flash floods, mudslides and debris flows may occur much more rapidly, and may be significantly larger, when the watershed has been burned.
5. Be particularly alert when driving. Bridges may be washed out and culverts overtopped. Do not cross flooding streams! *Turn Around, Don't Drown*®! Embankments along roadsides are particularly susceptible to landsliding. Watch the road for collapsed pavement, mud, fallen rocks and other indications of debris flow.

Courtesy of the U.S. Geological Survey



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