

NO WAY OUT! FLOOD SAFETY INFORMATION

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Moving water is very dangerous. Just 6" of fast moving water can knock you off your feet. Cars, including heavy trucks, can get swept away in less than 2-feet of swift water. **Never drive through moving water.** Nationwide, 70% of all flood-related fatalities are in vehicles.

Please remind everyone, especially children, to **stay away from flood control channels, rivers, streams and other waterways** when there is heavy rain runoff, including on sunny days immediately following, or in between, big storms.

When it rains, flood control channels, rivers, and arroyos can quickly fill up with fast-moving water, creating a potentially life-threatening danger to anyone who gets caught or swept away.

Even if it's sunny downstream, it may still be raining heavily upstream, sending flash floods downstream. Be weather wise!

There are also **dangerous hazards** in flood control channels and other waterways, including deadly **low-head dams**.

A low-head dams looks like fun water slides, but are called "**drowning machines**," because the water churns victims up and over and down until they drown.

Other hazards include **debris**, floodwater **contamination** from toxic chemicals and waste, and **slippery slopes** along the edges.

Flood control channels, rivers and streams are not a good place to play.

If you fall into the water, there may be NO WAY OUT! Swiftwater rescue is the only option.

Ideally, everyone will heed the warnings to avoid flood control channels, fast-flowing rivers and streams in flooding conditions. But **if someone gets swept away**, basic **safety knowledge is vital** in terms of helping swiftwater rescuers save them.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

- Never get into this situation! Stay away from flood control channels and fast moving floodwaters in streams and rivers.

What if you fall in?

- Remain calm. Don't waste energy yelling for help after you have been spotted by someone.
- Get ready to be rescued.
- Try to float on your back with your legs straight and your feet pointed downstream.
- Use your legs to shove yourself away from obstructions.
- Keep your head up so that you can see where you are going.
- Watch for obstacles and debris! If a tree or other stationary object is blocking the channel, forcing water over it, try to flip over on your stomach and approach the obstacle head-on, crawling over the top of it. Most victims in swift water die when they get pinned against obstacles, or get trapped in submerged debris and vegetation.

WHAT IF YOU SEE SOMEONE FALL INTO THE WATER?

- **DO NOT GO INTO THE WATER AFTER THE VICTIM!**
- **Immediately call 9-1-1!** Tell the operator that someone who fell into the channel is being swept downstream and that swiftwater rescue teams need to respond.
- **Give accurate information** about where you saw the victim go in, what the victim was wearing, etc.
- **Do not try to pull the victim out** with your hands, a rope, or similar device.
- **Do not attach anything to yourself** and toss it to a victim in the water. You will be pulled in by the force of the current.
- If possible, **throw an unattached flotation device** to the victim, such as a boogie board, Styrofoam ice chest, or basketball.

Swiftwater rescue is one of the **most dangerous** of all technical rescue operations performed by fire-rescue teams. Nearly **half of all deaths** in swift water are **would-be rescuers**. By endangering your life, you are also endangering the lives of others.

Stay away! Stay alive!

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