

Flood Safety Guide

AN APPEAL

As you know that flood is one of the most devastating disasters in our country .Every year lakhs of people lose their everything to floods. Certain precautions can help them to minimize the loss of life and kind. Right now flash flood due to KOSI has ruined the lives of over 20 lakhs of people in North Bihar. There has been huge loss of life and livelihood. Has there been some awareness among people regarding the flood safety ,the loss could have been minimized. It is our duty to educate the general masses about the dos and don'ts during flood. I have collected some of those precautions from various sources, and adapted them to suit the needs of especially poor of rural area. All the readers are encouraged to , recompile to suit their needs, print them in pamphlet form, distribute as hardcopies ,the mentioned information so that a massive awareness can be created to minimize the loss due to flood. NGOs and other organizations are requested to conduct massive awareness campaign on how to tackle floods .If you need any technical help please contact me. Even today lakhs of people are trapped in the middle of water, handmade rafts can be designed to rescue them.

Abhishek Bharadwaj

For areas seriously affected by floods

Choose a safe place such as roof top, higher areas such as bunds, or areas where you feel that water is unlikely to come.

Keep in touch with your community members and stay well informed about the water flow levels.

Keep precautions with deadly creatures like snake scorpion etc.

During night hours never go out anywhere without a stick and a light.

If you have no option but to evacuate, take minimum necessity with you as excess luggage will affect your carrying capacity. Keep all the belongings at height. (Homeless people may hang their belongings well covered on tree tops).

If possible take some dry food stuffs with you well covered with polythin. It is advised that you should take at least 3 days' food with you. Always stay in touch with local agencies and relief parties.

Take at least one red cloth piece with you. If unluckily you got trapped in some un-reachable place, waive tie it with a long stick and waive in the air as a mark of SOS. Chances are fair that you will be sought by rescue team.

If you have a GSM enabled cell phone don't forget 123 -the universal SOS number.

Identify where you could go if told to evacuate. Choose several places . . . a friend's home in another town, a hotel, or a shelter, a relief camp, nearby railway stations, schools, community centers.

It can be made from simple things like body of Banana tree or any other thing like wood, plastic etc. Local NGOs other agencies should train people about how to design a raft. More details can be searched through internet

[Follow the link <http://www.google.com/search?q=how+to+design+raft>](http://www.google.com/search?q=how+to+design+raft)

Never keep your house open. Always close it with a lock, or some means like hard-steel-wires(for extreme poor households).

Try to take your pets wherever you go. For more details on dealing with pets please see subsequent sections.

For areas where chance of flood is high

If a flood is likely in your area, you should:

- Listen to the radio or television for current information.
- Be aware that flash flooding (an immediate, unexpected flood situation) can occur. If there is any possibility of a flash flood, move immediately to higher ground. Do not wait for instructions to move.
- Be aware of streams, drainage channels, canyons, and other areas known to flood suddenly. Flash floods can occur in these areas with or without such typical warnings as rain clouds or heavy rain.
- If it has been raining hard for several hours, or steadily raining for several days, be alert to the possibility of a flood.
- A flood WATCH means a flood is possible in your area.
- A flood WARNING means flooding is already occurring or will occur soon in your area.

If you must prepare to evacuate, you should do the following:

- Secure your home. If you have time, bring in outdoor furniture. Move essential items to an upper floor.
- Turn off utilities at the main switches or valves if instructed to do so. Disconnect electrical appliances. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

If you have to leave your home, remember these evacuation tips:

- Do not walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- People come first. Provide assistance. Note needs of people with disabilities.
- Move or secure vital records/high priority items if it can be done safely.

Move items away from windows and below-ground storage into water-resistant areas, especially in the higher areas

- Move outdoor objects indoors or secure.
- Remain calm, reassuring.
- Look for electrical system damage: sparks, broken/frayed wires, smell of burning insulation. Turn off electricity at main switch if you can without risk.
- Shut off water.

Assemble an emergency kit containing

- ✓ First aid and essential medications.
- ✓ Portable dry food items
- ✓ A radio set or mobile phone if available
- ✓ Protective clothing, rainwear, and bedding or sleeping bags.
- ✓ Inflated tubes of bigger tyre if available

Identify where you could go if told to evacuate. Choose several places . . . a friend's home in another town, a motel, or a shelter, or a relief camp, nearby railway stations, schools, community centers.

In rural areas several people can collectively design a raft which will help them for easy escape. The cost of designing a raft can be as low as Rs.50. It can be made from simple things like body of Banana tree or any other thing like wood, plastic etc. Local NGOs other agencies should train people about how to design a raft. More details can be searched through internet
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Don't panic and keep calm all the time. People should collectively take decision and youths should come forward to pave the route of escaping.

If there are chances of flood in the night at least few people should keep awake. Village Mukhiya can assign relevant roles to different persons.

IF YOU EVACUATE YOUR HOME, DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PETS BEHIND! PETS MOST LIKELY CANNOT SURVIVE ON THEIR OWN; AND IF BY SOME REMOTE CHANCE THEY DO, YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO FIND THEM WHEN YOU RETURN.

- Make sure identification tags are up to date and securely fastened to your pet's collar. If possible, attach the address and/or phone number of your evacuation site. If your pet gets lost, his tag is his ticket home. Make sure you have a current photo of your pet for identification purposes.
- Make sure you have a secure pet carrier, leash or harness for your pet so that if he panics, he can't escape.
- Call your local emergency management office, animal shelter, or animal control office to get advice and information.

- If you have no alternative but to leave your pet at home, there are some precautions you must take, but remember that leaving your pet at home alone can place your animal in great danger! Confine your pet to a safe area inside -- NEVER leave your pet chained outside! Leave them loose inside your home with food and plenty of water. Remove the toilet tank lid, raise the seat and brace the bathroom door open so they can drink. Place a notice outside in a visible area, advising what pets are in the house and where they are located. Provide a phone number where you or a contact can be reached as well as the name and number of your vet.

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