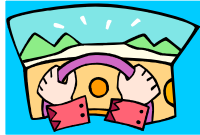




Safety Matters

Turn Around – Don't Drown



Heavy rains usually close several local roads. Some of us travel those roads every day and must make detours to get to campus or into the city. How many times have you been in a hurry and were tempted to drive through high water? More people lose their lives in floods than in any other weather event. Here are some facts to keep in mind the next time you are faced with a road closed by flooding.

- Six inches of rapidly moving water can sweep you off your feet or cause you to lose control of your car.
- Most cars can be swept away in 18 inches of moving water and will usually roll over while being swept downstream.
- More than half of all flood-related drownings occur when a vehicle is **driven into** floodwaters. Walking into or near floodwaters is the cause of the next highest percentage of flood-related deaths.
- Floodwaters can hide a washed-out road that you drove on just the day before.
- Commercials advertising the ability of their truck or SUV to drive through high water can lead to a false sense of security or even to tragic consequences. Those vehicles may have only an additional six to twelve inches of clearance. Their weight or tire tread is not a factor in whether or not they can be swept away. If an aircraft carrier can float, why not a Hummer?

Know when you are at risk! Keep abreast of the latest weather watches and warnings by tuning to local media or by listening to a weather radio. Be especially careful when driving after dark. If you know a road on your regular route might be closed due to flooding, plan another route and take the extra time into account.

Watch the video, "Low Water Crossings" from the National Weather Service. A link to this video is on the EHS web page at www.ehs.okstate.edu/links/driving.htm.