



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
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Emergency Management

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DHSEM offers safety tips for monsoon season

Santa Fe, NM – New Mexico is less than a month into the 2021 monsoon season, and heavy rains have already caused severe flooding across the state, including Lincoln, Chaves, Eddy, Valencia, and Socorro counties. Typically lasting from June 15 to September 15, monsoon is the wettest season for New Mexico, and exceedingly dry conditions make it much more likely that rainfall will lead to flash floods. However, there are many steps that residents can take to be prepared for monsoon-related disasters.

Before a flood:

- **Know your risk.** [Visit FEMA's Flood Map Service Center](#) to know types of flood risk in your area. Sign up for your community's warning system. The [Emergency Alert System \(EAS\)](#) and [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](#) Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts.
- **Make a plan** for your household, including your pets, so that you and your family know what to do, where to go, and what you will need to protect yourselves from flooding. Learn and practice evacuation routes, shelter plans, and flash flood response.
- **Gather supplies**, including three gallons of water, a first aid kit, a stock of food that requires no cooking or refrigeration, a battery-operated radio, flashlights, extra batteries, necessary medications, and a back-up power source.
- **Purchase or renew flood insurance.** Homeowner's insurance does not cover flooding. Information on flood insurance through The National Flood Insurance Program is available at floodsmart.gov. While there is typically a 30-day waiting period for an NFIP insurance policy to go into effect, this wait may be waived in the event of flooding after a wildfire.

During a flood:

- **Evacuate immediately**, if told to evacuate. Never drive around barricades. Local responders use them to safely direct traffic out of flooded areas.

- **Stay off bridges** over fast-moving water. Fast-moving water can wash bridges away without warning.
- Do not walk, swim, or drive through flood waters. **Turn Around. Don't Drown!**

After a flood:

- **Avoid driving** except in emergencies.
- Wear heavy work gloves, **protective clothing**, and boots during clean up, and use appropriate face coverings or masks if cleaning mold or other debris.
- Be aware of the **risk of electrocution**. Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water. Turn off the electricity to prevent electric shock if it is safe to do so.
- **Avoid wading in floodwater**, which can be contaminated and contain dangerous debris. Underground or downed power lines can also electrically charge the water.

Residents can also contact their local emergency managers for help obtaining **sandbags**. Properly filled and placed sandbags are a simple but effective tool for diverting flood waters around buildings, and in recent weeks DHSEM has delivered more than 400,000 sandbags across the state. Detailed instructions from the US Army Corps of Engineers for filling and placing sandbags are available [here](#). Lastly, residents who have been affected by a disaster can contact the **American Red Cross of New Mexico** for emergency support and recovery planning at **1-800-842-7349**.

“It is incredibly important to plan ahead during monsoon season,” said **DHSEM Secretary Bianca Ortiz-Wertheim**. “In normally dry New Mexico, heavy rainfall can lead to flash flooding very quickly, and in some cases, it can take several days before flood waters recede enough to begin recovering. Help your family, friends, and neighbors to stay safe.”

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DHSEM works to protect the people of New Mexico and the nation through a comprehensive and coordinated program of mitigating hazards, preparing for emergencies, preventing attacks, and recovering from disasters.