



STATE OF FLORIDA

# DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **PANHANDLE, NORTH FLORIDA RESIDENTS URGED TO USE CAUTION AS FLASH FLOOD WATCHES ARE ISSUED FOR TODAY AND FRIDAY**

**TALLAHASSEE-** Florida emergency management officials are urging residents and visitors in the Panhandle and North Florida regions to remain vigilant near local rivers and use caution on area roadways as a storm system impacts the northern third of the state today and Friday evening.

This system will also bring widespread showers and isolated thunderstorms beginning this evening in the Florida Panhandle. Periods of heavy rains are expected with projected rainfall totals of one-to-three-inches and in a few counties up to four inches through Friday.

This rainfall is expected to lead to additional rises on already swollen river systems from the Ochlocknee River westward to Alabama. Residents need to have disaster plans in place and should be ready to heed any local evacuation orders.

The State EOC in Tallahassee remains at Level 2 – partial activation. Operations, Plans and Meteorology staff continue to follow the severe weather and flood threat through the State Watch Office (SWO), the 24/7 link to all 67 Florida counties.

### **Before the Flood**

Residents in a highly flood-prone area should:

- Have a NOAA weather radio, with tone alert, on hand, and during heavy rains, monitor it for flood warnings, watches or statements. Stay tuned to radio or television stations.
- Keep materials on hand like sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting, a supply of plastic garbage bags and lumber.
- Keep your automobile fueled.
- Keep a stock of food which requires little cooking and no refrigeration.
- Keep a portable radio, emergency cooking equipment, lights and flashlights in working order.

### **During the Flood**

Residents in a highly flood-prone area should:

- Avoid driving into water of unknown depth, especially in periods of low visibility. Moving water can quickly sweep your vehicle away. Standing water deep enough to cover wheels can cause cars to float---possibly into a canal, river or pond.
- If asked by local officials, quickly evacuate to avoid being cut off by flood water. Turn off all utilities at the main switch if time permits.

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- If time permits, move furnishings to safe ground; fill tanks to keep them from floating away, tie down propane tanks and grease immovable machinery.
- If your caught in the house by the suddenly rising flood waters, move to the second floor and/or if necessary, to the roof. Take warm clothing as well as your flashlight with you. Don't try to swim to safety. Wait for help.

For more information on the Florida Division of Emergency Management and to GET A PLAN!, please visit: [www.FloridaDisaster.org](http://www.FloridaDisaster.org). All students, teachers and parents can find educational information and free downloadable materials at: [www.KidsGetAPlan.com](http://www.KidsGetAPlan.com). And for the latest flash reports go to: [www.YouTube.com/FloridaSERT](http://www.YouTube.com/FloridaSERT).

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