



GASTON COUNTY Office of Emergency Management and Fire Services

615 N. Highland St.
Gastonia, NC 28052

Office (704) 866-3350
Scott Hunter, Sr., Director

August 6, 2024

NEWS RELEASE

RESIDENTS SHOULD REVIEW PRE-FLOODING PLANS AS TROPICAL STORM DEBBY APPROACHES

GASTONIA, N.C. – Gaston County’s Office of Emergency Management and Fire Services is closely monitoring the storm path of Tropical Storm Debby, as it makes its way up the coast. The track of the storm is projected to bring it inland through the center of the Carolinas, and GCOEMFS is urging residents to review flooding preparations.

Flash floods are the No. 1 cause of weather-related deaths in the United States. More people die from floods every year than tornadoes, lightning or hurricanes. On average, flooding kills 89 people each year, according to the National Weather Service.

A flood watch is when conditions are favorable for one to occur.

A flood warning means flooding is either happening or will happen shortly.

Residents are encouraged to follow Gaston County Government social media and updates at GastonGov.com for important weather information. In addition, residents can sign up for free emergency notifications through the Alert Gaston program, which can be found on the [Emergency Management and Fire Services page](#) of GastonGov.com.

Some areas in Gaston County are more prone than others to flooding, including many areas along the South Fork River, such as Riverside Drive, Goat Island, Dallas Road and others.

Tips to follow in preparation for heavy rain/flood

- Know your flood risk
- Make a flood emergency plan
- Build or restock your emergency preparedness kit, including a flashlight, batteries, cash, and first aid supplies
- Familiarize yourself with local emergency plans. Know where to go and how to get there should you need to get to higher ground, the highest level of a building, or to evacuate
- Bring in outdoor furniture and move important indoor items to the highest possible floor. This will help protect them from flood damage

- Stay tuned to your phone alerts, TV, or radio for weather updates, emergency instructions, or evacuation orders
- Disconnect electrical appliances

Tips to follow in the event of a flood

-- TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN!

- Move immediately to higher ground or stay on high ground. Evacuate if directed.
- Avoid walking or driving through flood waters. Six inches of moving water can knock you down and one foot of water can sweep your vehicle away. If water surrounds your car but is not moving, abandon the car and seek higher ground
- Stay out of floodwaters which could contain: downed power lines and trees, wild animals like snakes, human and livestock waste, household, medical or industrial hazardous waste
- Avoid any room where water is covering electrical outlets or you hear noises such as buzzing or crackling. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water. The water may be electrified
- Avoid camping or parking along any creek, rivers, or streams, as these places flood first and are more susceptible to flash flooding

Tips to follow after a flood

- After a flood, return home only when authorities say it is safe
- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded and watch out for debris. Floodwaters often erode roads and walkways
- Do not attempt to drive through areas still flooded, and avoid standing water as it may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines
- Photograph damage to your property for insurance purposes

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