

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wolf Administration Encourages Preparing for Spring and Summer Flooding

Harrisburg, PA – The Wolf Administration today encouraged Pennsylvanians to be prepared for possible spring and summer flooding during Flood Safety Awareness Week in Pennsylvania, March 26 – 30.

“There are a number of very specific things you can do right now to make sure you’re ready with a plan if flooding affects your home or business,” said PEMA Acting Director Randy Padfield. “Start with one step, and then chose one or two more to broaden your plan’s value so that it can be used in any type of emergency.”

Padfield said the following steps are a good start in getting ready for possible flooding:

- learn the difference between a weather watch and weather warning, since each requires different steps to stay safe:
 - A flood watch means that flooding may occur. Residents should stay alert, closely monitor rivers and streams, and be prepared to move to high ground quickly.
 - A flood warning means that there is actual flooding. Residents should act at once and move to high ground.
- get a NOAA weather radio so you’re notified about severe weather and can take appropriate safety steps;
- sign up to get weather alerts on your cell phone from a trusted source;
- determine how you would leave your neighborhood if you needed to evacuate your home;
- identify where you would meet up with your family (both in your town and an out-of-town location) in the event you were separated when the flooding started; and
- purchase flood insurance, even if you don’t live in a federally-designated flood zone.

“Since 1993, more than 90 percent of flood reports to the National Weather Service in Pennsylvania have happened outside the identified flood zones,” Padfield said.

“Flooding can happen anywhere and since it can take 30 days for a flood insurance policy to take effect, you need to start the process now.”

Governor Wolf’s Restore Pennsylvania proposal would benefit disaster survivors when damages do not meet federally established thresholds for federal aid. Restore

Pennsylvania is a statewide plan to aggressively address the commonwealth's vital infrastructure needs. Funded through a commonsense severance tax, Restore Pennsylvania is the only plan that will help make Pennsylvania a leader in the 21st century. A detailed overview of the plan is available [online](#).

Flooding also poses a threat to your family's health and safety.

"Floodwater can be toxic and dangerous, so we encourage people to avoid coming in contact with it," Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine said. "Sewage and hazardous materials are often found in floodwater, which contaminates water sources and can lead to gastrointestinal illness. Sharp objects, such as glass and other damaged objects can also be found in the water, these can cause injuries and infections such as tetanus."

More information about how to prepare for an emergency, including specific information for people with specialized needs such as pets or access and functional needs, is available on the [ReadyPA](#) webpage.

Governor Wolf's Restore Pennsylvania proposal also would provide funding for municipalities to take steps to prevent flooding via streambank restoration, levees or floodwalls, and stream restoration and maintenance. Estimates show that every dollar spent on hazard mitigation efforts saves seven dollars in response and recovery operation costs.

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