

## Safety Actions after a Flood

- Remain calm.
- Listen to your radio to keep informed about all that's happening.
- Do not listen to rumours and do not pass any along.
- Do not use telephone or CB units unless it is vital. Keep them clear for emergency calls.
- Boil drinking water or purify by adding bleach until you are told that the water supply is safe. Boil for at least ten (10) minutes or add two drops of bleach to every litre of water.
- To prevent the breeding of mosquitoes, punch holes in all containers in which water can settle.
- Keep garbage tightly sealed.
- Report illnesses to the nearest health centre or doctor.
- Do not walk barefooted outside, during or after the flood. Wear water boots or hard bottom shoes.
- Do not touch loose or dangling electrical wires.
- Do not go sightseeing in affected areas.
- Exercise caution when using bridges, fording and passes that are near to rivers and streams already in spate. Do not attempt to cross any body of moving water.
- Bury all dead animals as soon as possible.

## Your Emergency Checklist

### Personnel:

- Police
- Fire
- Doctor/Nurse
- CB Operator
- Councilor/MP
- Parish Disaster Coordinator/Parish Council
- Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM)

### Shelter:

- Church
- School
- Public Office
- Relative
- Friend
- Other

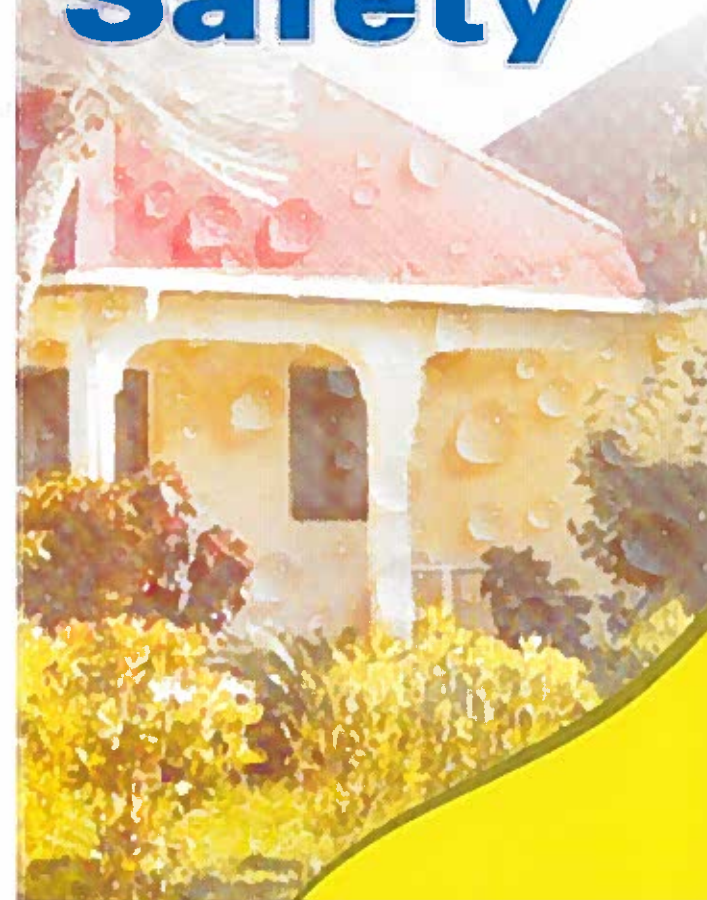
### Supplies:

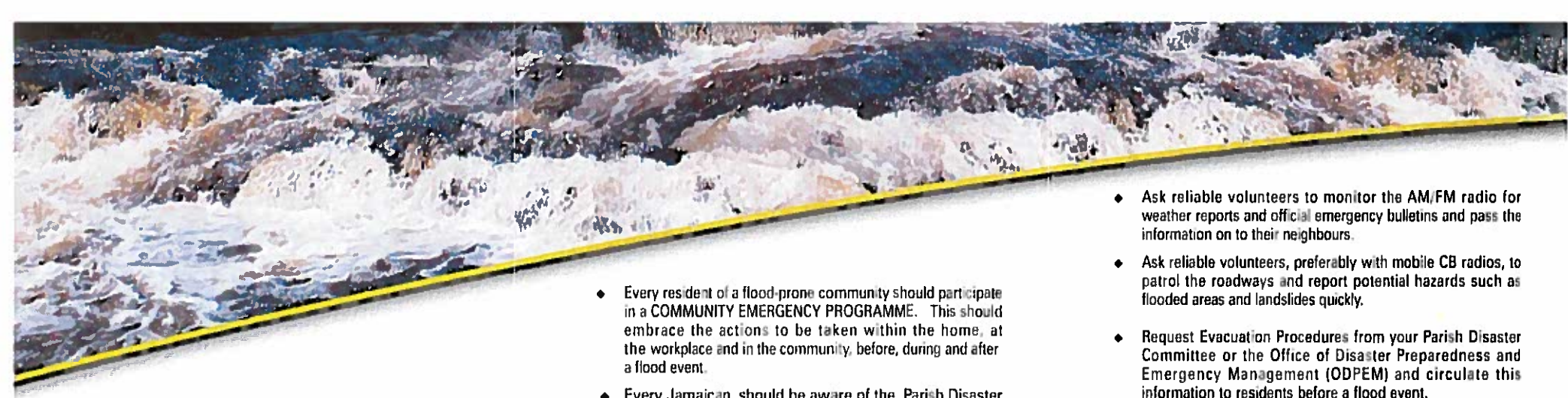
- Tinned foods, foods that can be kept without refrigeration, treated drinking water, plastic containers, can opener
- Transistor Radio with spare batteries
- First Aid Kit
- Candles, matches, flashlights, lanterns
- Clothing, raincoats, water boots
- Kerosene oil, dry charcoal
- Boards, hammer, nails, rope, wire
- First aid supplies and extra medicines

For further information contact  
**Office of Disaster Preparedness  
and Emergency Management**  
2-4 Haining Road, Kingston 5  
Tel: 876-906-9674-5 or 876-754-9077-8  
Fax: 876-754-3229  
Email: [odpem@cwjamaica.com](mailto:odpem@cwjamaica.com)  
Http://[www.odpem.org.jm](http://www.odpem.org.jm)



# Flood Safety





## Floods

Flooding occurs when drainage channels are filled and the rivers and streams can no longer accommodate the excessive water generated by severe weather conditions. The drainage channels then overtop their natural or artificial banks and water enters the surrounding lands to cause flooding.

Severe weather conditions which lead to intense rainfall such as local thunderstorms, cold fronts, tropical waves, tropical depressions, tropical storms and hurricanes can result in flooding.

Jamaicans most likely to be worst affected by flooding are those who live in flood-prone areas such as low-lying, coastal areas and those who occupy gully banks. While flood plain maps can identify flood-prone areas and forewarn of flooding, it is the planned and prompt actions of the individual and the community that will determine the extent of the flood impact and save lives.

## What every Jamaican can do

Many losses during flood events can be avoided, especially if the community has an effective early warning system and its residents engage in pre-disaster planning.

- ◆ Every resident of a flood-prone community must develop an **EMERGENCY PLAN** to protect life and property. Your plan should include practical steps to secure your personal possessions, crops & livestock, property and sources of income from flood damage.

- ◆ Every resident of a flood-prone community should participate in a **COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PROGRAMME**. This should embrace the actions to be taken within the home, at the workplace and in the community, before, during and after a flood event.
- ◆ Every Jamaican, should be aware of the Parish Disaster Committee (PDC) and its functions. The PDC works, in collaboration with voluntary agencies as well as the Emergency Services (Police, fire, public works, health, etc.) and ODPEM.
- ◆ Residents should know how to contact the police station, fire brigade, emergency services and local volunteers in their community.
- ◆ Residents in flood-prone areas should know where to find the temporary shelters in their community, with friends or relatives or as a last resort, a public shelter such as a church or school. You should also identify and get to know Poor Relief Officers, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army and other service agencies.

## Community Actions

- ◆ Discuss community needs and resources with your Parish Disaster Committee, Parish Councilor and/or Member of Parliament before a flood event.
- ◆ Identify a network of people, institutions and agencies capable of providing leadership and community service in case of a flood emergency.
- ◆ Organize a Community Task Force to help clean and maintain drains, gullies, culverts and sinkholes. Report blocked drains to the Public Works Department, the Parish Council representative and Member of Parliament, as soon as possible.
- ◆ Organize a simple **EARLY WARNING SYSTEM** that will be recognized and accepted by your neighbours.
- ◆ Identify operators who can provide reliable communications.
- ◆ Ask reliable volunteers to observe the water level of rivers and streams during periods of heavy rainfall and report findings to a local authority such as the police or fire brigade.

- ◆ Ask reliable volunteers to monitor the AM/FM radio for weather reports and official emergency bulletins and pass the information on to their neighbours.
- ◆ Ask reliable volunteers, preferably with mobile CB radios, to patrol the roadways and report potential hazards such as flooded areas and landslides quickly.
- ◆ Request Evacuation Procedures from your Parish Disaster Committee or the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) and circulate this information to residents before a flood event.

## Tips and Precautions

**If a flood warning is given or heavy rain has been experienced for several days, you will need to:-**

- Make arrangements for personal safety. If possible, arrange for care of the sick, the elderly and children, by relatives and friends in safe locations.
- Make sure the radio is in good working order. Stay tuned to news and weather reports. Listen for emergency instructions.
- Keep an emergency supply of food, sterilized water, essential medicines and clothing on hand at all times.
- Learn the quickest evacuation routes from your community.
- Know how to contact the police, fire brigade, CB and Ham Radio Operators in an emergency.
- Wrap all important personal items, family documents, electrical appliances, in plastic bags and store away from the reach of flood waters.
- Store prized possessions such as refrigerator, stove and furniture to the highest floor level, or place on building blocks and secure to the wall.
- Shut off electrical power, gas and water supplies in areas prone to flooding.
- Store all chemicals, fertilizers, insecticides, etc. in properly labelled waterproof containers.
- Trim low-lying branches from trees that are near to your house.