



## SOUTHWEST PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

1109 North Jackson Street  
Albany, Georgia 31701-2022  
(229) 430-4599 Fax (229) 430-5143 Emergency 888-430-4590  
[www.southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org](http://www.southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org)

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Carolyn Maschke, Public Information Officer  
229-430-1969; 229-357-0257; [cwmaschke@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:cwmaschke@dhr.state.ga.us)

### Public Health warning: Hurricanes bring hazards of inland flooding to Southwest Georgia

When hurricanes make landfall along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, dangerous weather doesn't stop at the shore. Hurricane-spawned tornadoes, strong winds and powerful floods also threaten life, limb and property in Southwest Georgia, warned Southwest Health Director Dr. Jacqueline Grant.

"Inland flooding is often the greatest hazard of all," Grant said. "Some of the greatest rainfall amounts occur from weaker storms that drift slowly or stall over an area. Alberto, the tropical storm that resulted in the devastating Flood of 1994 here, is a perfect example of that."

According to the National Hurricane Center, nearly a quarter of the U.S. tropical cyclone deaths occur to people who drown in, or attempting to abandon, their cars.

"In a study from 1970 to 1999, freshwater flooding accounted for more than half – 59 percent – of hurricane-related deaths in the United States, and 78 percent of children killed by these tropical storms drowned in freshwater floods," said Grant. "That's why, during hurricane season, we want to raise awareness about the dangers associated with flooding as well as hazards like tornadoes, downed power lines, contaminated well water, waterborne diseases and power outages."

Data shows individuals between the ages of 30-39 years old are more likely to attempt to drive through flooded roads only to be swept away by rushing waters. "The rule is simple: If you cannot see the road or its line markings, do not drive through the water," Grant said.

Preparations recommended by Southwest Health District include:

- Monitor NOAA weather radio.
- When you hear hurricane, think inland flooding.
- Determine whether you live in a potential flood zone.
- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Keep abreast of road conditions through the news media.
- Move to a safe area before access is cut off by flood water.
- Do not attempt to cross flowing water. As little as six inches of water may cause you to lose control of your vehicle.
- Develop a flood emergency action plan.
- Have flood insurance. Flood damage is not usually covered by homeowners insurance. Do not make assumptions. Check your policy.

For more information hurricane preparedness, contact your local county health department or go online to [www.southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org](http://www.southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org).

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Baker	Calhoun	Colquitt	Decatur	Dougherty	Early	Grady
Lee	Miller	Mitchell	Seminole	Terrell	Thomas	Worth