

Flood Safety Awareness Week Day 2: Flooding Hazards

The National Weather Service has declared March 15 through 19 Flood Safety Awareness Week. The National Weather Service in Caribou will feature a different educational topic each day during the week. Today's topic: Making You Aware of the Flooding Hazard.

The National Weather Service in Caribou watches the skies, rivers, streams, and brooks of northern and eastern Maine and is tasked with the responsibility to alert you to flooding hazards. This is done through several methods including NOAA Weather Radio, the internet, email, and text messages. Let's discuss flood types and the products available to you.

Flooding is generally described in two ways: river/areal flooding, and flash flooding. River and areal flooding typically occurs over a long duration and involves a higher level of predictability because of river gauges throughout the area and complex computer model simulations. On the other hand, flash flooding is defined as rapid and sudden inundation that lasts for relatively short periods of time. Each of these flooding types pose serious risk and should be respected. Now let's take a look at flood hazard products and what they mean.

Flood and flash flood watches. A flood or flash flood watch is issued when a significant threat of flooding exists, but is not imminent or occurring. This is the time to begin preparations to protect yourself, your neighbors, and your property.

Flood and flash flood warning. Warning products mean that the threat of flooding is imminent or occurring and immediate action is necessary to protect yourself. The time to prepare for flood waters has passed and people should seek safety immediately.

Flood advisory. This product is used for situations when flooding constitutes more of a nuisance, and when proper caution is exercised, life threatening situations are not anticipated.

Daily forecasts and outlooks of flooding hazards are available for northern and eastern Maine and can be found at www.weather.gov/CAR. To receive reports via email or your phone check out <http://inws.wrh.noaa.gov>.

In addition, NOAA Weather Radios will alarm when life threatening flood hazards are predicted for your area.