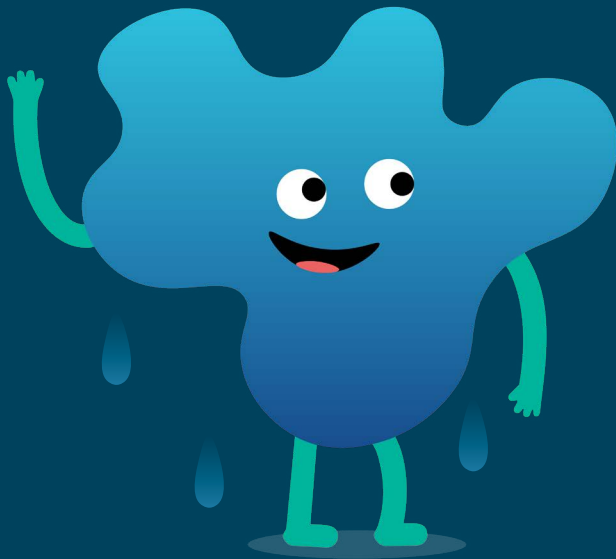


WEATHER YOUR DRIVE

Flood Wise Fact Sheet



Floodwater on roads is unpredictable and dangerous. Even a small amount can sweep away a vehicle, hide hazards, and turn a routine drive into a life-threatening situation.

Did you know?

Driving through floodwater causes more than half of unintentional flood-related deaths⁸.

In an NRSP survey on severe and changing weather conditions, 55% of respondents identified flooding as the greatest road safety risk when driving for work.

Flash flooding can occur almost anywhere there is a relatively short, intense burst of rainfall, such as during a thunderstorm. Flash flooding can pose a significant threat because it is unpredictable and can appear quickly and without warning.

According to rescue services, floodwater is often deeper and faster flowing than it appears and may contain unseen chemicals, debris and animals that can cause illness or death.

Risks of driving in flood-affected areas

- 💧 Aquaplaning
- 💧 Skidding
- 💧 Misjudging water depth
- 💧 Collisions from slippery roads
- 💧 Reduced visibility
- 💧 Longer braking distances
- 💧 Hidden potholes and uneven road surfaces
- 💧 Lane drifting



Why is it unsafe to drive through floodwater?

- 💧 A standard one-tonne small hatch or coupe can float in as little as **15cm of water**⁶.
- 💧 Floodwaters may not appear that deep or dangerous from a distance, but their fast-flowing speed can cause vehicles to lose traction and wash away⁶.
- 💧 It is likely there are other hazards you may not be able to see, such as debris or potholes, that are covered by floodwater⁶.
- 💧 Brake pad moisture can affect your ability to brake quickly⁶.

Why do people choose to drive through floodwater?

Drivers with no experience in flood situations are more likely to underestimate the risks of driving into floodwater³.

Studies show that people think they can safely drive into floodwater because of their experience, driving skills or vehicle capability.

Rushing for time and pressure to reach a destination such as home or work may outweigh waiting, changing routes or other alternatives as they are considered unrealistic or inconvenient. Watching other vehicles successfully drive through floodwater can give drivers a false sense of safety and reduce their perception of risk⁷.

Recommendations for drivers

- Prepare an **emergency kit** with essential supplies.



- Listen to and watch reports from **Emergency Services**.



- Turn **headlights on** (low beam) in wet conditions when visibility is reduced.



- Maintain a safe following distance of at least **4 seconds** to the vehicle in front of you.



- If safe to do so, **pull over, stop or turn around** if the road ahead is flooded or covered in a body of water.



Recommendations for managers

- Strengthen fleet and travel policies.



- Address pressure to follow others who drive in floodwater. Actively encourage employees to turn back in unsafe conditions.



- Emphasise emergency preparedness.

