



Licking County Planning Department
And Offices of Community & Economic Development
20 South Second Street, Newark, Ohio 43055

2009 Severe Weather Calendar of Events

[National Flood Safety Awareness Week - March 16-20, 2009](#)

[Ohio's Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week - March 22-28, 2009](#)

[Statewide Tornado Drill - March 25, 2009 9:50 a.m.](#)

[National Lightning Safety Awareness Week - June 21-27, 2009](#)

[Ohio's Winter Safety Awareness Week - November 15-21, 2009](#)

National Flood Safety Awareness Week March 16 - 20, 2009

by Julia Dian-Reed, National Weather Service,
Jeff Walker, Licking County Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security/911 Agency,
Jim Mickey, Licking County Planning Department,
and the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness

Seasons come and seasons go, but the need for safety in dealing with severe weather events knows no season. In fact, the more information we have regarding extremes of nature, the better that we can protect our family, our property, and our community.

Licking County officials have partnered with various other agencies and entities to present the following information to help increase the safety of our citizens as we leave winter weather behind us and head into the spring and summer seasons.

A Flood Overview

What Is a Flood?

Devastating floods occur throughout the U.S. every year. Ninety percent (90%) of all presidentially declared natural disasters involve flooding.

Flooding is usually divided into two categories: flash flooding and river flooding. Both can cause death, injury, and property destruction.

In Licking County, Ohio, we have what is termed depressional or topographic flooding. This is where water pools in lower areas, and ponds or puddles until the weather dries out. We also experience flooding from the backwater areas of dams, such as Dillon Dam, as well as where the roadway or railroad acts as a dike or levee, impeding the flow of storm water overland across the ground to the ditch, stream, creek, or river.

Flash floods are usually caused by slow-moving thunderstorms or thunderstorms that move over the same area one after the other. Flash floods usually occur within six hours of heavy rainfall and are usually more life threatening, according to the National Weather Service.

The majority of **deaths** from flooding occur when **people become trapped in automobiles** that stall **while driving through flooded areas**. Nearly half of all flood fatalities are vehicle-related.

How Floods are Formed

Several factors contribute to flooding. The two key elements are **rainfall intensity and duration**. Intensity is the rate of rainfall, and duration is how long the rain lasts. **Topography, soil conditions, and ground cover** also play an important role.

What Is a Flash Flood?

Intense rainfall in a brief period leaves more water than the ground can absorb. When this happens, flash flooding can occur.

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Flash floods occur with little or no warning, move at very fast speeds and can reach a peak in a few minutes. They can roll rocks, tear out trees, sweep away cars and trucks, and destroy buildings and bridges. Rapidly rising water can reach heights of 30 feet or more. Flash flood-producing rains can also trigger catastrophic mudslides. You will not always have a warning that these deadly, sudden floods are coming. Most flood deaths are due to flash floods.