



School Safety and Emergency Management

← Monthly Minute: Flood and Water Safety →

May 2024

Monthly Minute is a newsletter providing insight and tips on potential threats and hazards brought to you by the Oregon Department of Education.



Flooding is one of the most common environmental hazards in Oregon. You should first identify the risk of flooding in your district during the second step of your **six-step planning process**: *understand the situation*. That is the point in the process when you should identify your threats and hazards and assess the risk associated with each one. Knowing what you are up against can go a long way toward preventing, and even mitigating, disasters.

Check out the Federal Emergency Management's **Flood Map Service Center** to see if your buildings, bus routes, or reunification sites are in flood hazard zones. Another good resource is **Oregon HazVu** by the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries. You can use their interactive map to find other risks in your

area beyond flooding.

Now that you have checked the map of your area, do you see that your school buildings are in, or near, a flood hazard zone? If they are, have you planned for, and implemented, mitigation measures that will reduce the impact of flooding? Sometimes we have to plan around existing and unchangeable conditions, but if you find yourself in this situation, don't aggravate the situation by failing to plan for keeping your students and staff safe.

Identify evacuation routes and reunification sites that avoid flood hazard zones. The age-old maxim "get to higher ground and stay there" is absolutely true when seeking to avoid danger during high rainfall that brings flooding. It is one thing to have a building stuck in a flood hazard zone. It's another to plan evacuation from that building and to a reunification site that also sits in a flood hazard zone. We can't always move or lift the buildings we have. But we can plan to safely evacuate and reunify in places that will minimize our exposure to floods, flash flooding or landslides.

If all this is overwhelming, don't panic. Others

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This Month... Conduct a Shelter! Drill. Consider flash flood hazards and identify areas in the community that are prone to flooding.



Conduct a Shelter-in-Place Drill in May.

Up Next... June's Monthly Minute will address wildfire safety and things you can do to mitigate your vulnerability to wildfires. Conduct an Evacuate! Drill in June.



Conduct an Evacuate! Drill in June.



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Recreational Water Safety

Heavy rainfall can bring unwanted flooding or even landslides. No one wants to be caught in flood waters unexpectedly. However, summer is just around the corner and almost everyone likes to cool off in a pool or on the river. Remind your students and staff to stay safe on the waters this summer by sharing some water safety tips from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



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likely already know the safest routes and locations in your community. For example, your **county emergency management office** should already have a plan for sheltering and evacuation routes for all types of threats and hazards. Contact them and ask them for help planning for tomorrow's challenges. Remember: your very first step when following the six-step planning process is to form a collaborative planning team.

Some additional actions to take before, during, and after a flood:

- Stay tuned in to local weather reports for flood warnings. Be prepared to evacuate to higher

ground with short notice.

- Have a plan in place that will support all persons with access and functional needs—consider everyone who may need additional assistance in a flood.
- Have sandbags ready to create barriers to safeguard your facilities.
- Have a **communications plan** that will notify parents of early dismissal if your area becomes unsafe to occupy.
- For fact sheets on preparing for flooding in a variety of languages, as well as additional information on flooding, visit the **Oregon Health Authority's page on flood preparedness.**

Visit our contact page below for help with this or any other school preparedness topic.

Contact Information

Scan the QR code below or [click this link](#) to connect with a school emergency management professional for help on this or any other school emergency topic.



Join us on the **2nd Wednesday of every month at 8:30am** to get assistance with this or other emergency preparedness topics: [ZOOM LINK!](#)

Resources

Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools: [threat and hazard specific planning resources.](#)

Oregon hazards: [Oregon Department of Emergency Management's page.](#)

[Turn around, don't drown.](#)

Oregon Emergency Management [local contacts list.](#)