



Driving on the Right Side of the Road Turn Around - Don't Drown



JUST THE FACTS

- Water-covered roadways can be deceptive. There is no way to tell how deep it actually is or what the condition of the roadway is. In addition to deep water creating a safety risk, the swift moving water can also erode the waterway, meaning that there could be even deeper holes in the road than the surface that you have been driving on.
- Vehicles, like ships, float because of buoyancy. Most cars can be swept away in 18 to 24 inches of moving water. Trucks and SUVs do not do much better with the additional 6 to 12 inches of clearance. If the water has sufficient force, the vehicle will become buoyant with the water pushing it sideways. Once swept downstream, the vehicle often rolls or flips over entirely.

NATIONALLY:

- Flash flooding is the leading cause of weather-related deaths in the U.S.¹
- Over 50% of flood-related drownings are vehicle-related.²

TEXAS:

- Flash flooding is the number one cause of weather-related deaths in Texas.³
- 76% of flood fatalities are vehicle-related.⁴
- Texas is the state with the most flood/flash flood deaths. Total flood-related deaths are double the total for the next highest state, California.⁵

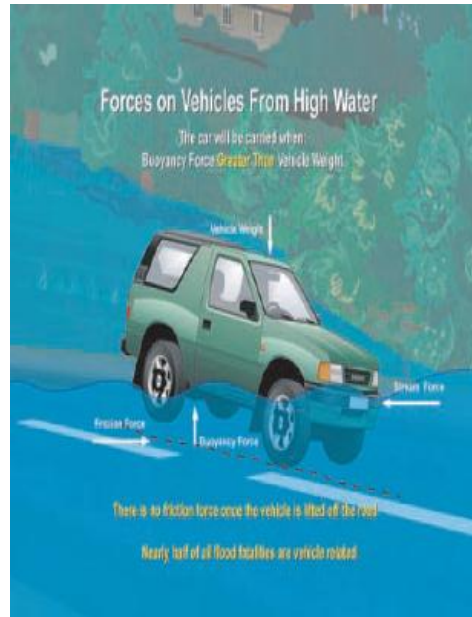
IT'S THE LAW

- It is especially important to obey all road signs and barricades regarding high water. It is a criminal offense to tamper with or disobey warning devices in Texas, as can be seen in these laws:
 - A person commits an offense if the person tampers with, damages, or removes a barricade, flare pot, sign, flasher signal, or other device warning of construction repair, or detour, on or adjacent to a highway set out by the state, a political subdivision, a contractor, or a public utility.⁶
 - A person commits an offense if the person:
 - disobeys the instructions, signals, warnings, or markings of a warning sign.
 - drives around a barricade.⁷
- Tampering with a warning device is punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000, up to two years in jail, or both.⁸
- Disobeying a warning sign or driving around a barricade is punishable by a fine of up to \$2,000, up to 180 days in jail, or both.⁹

KEEP IT SAFE

- Turn around; don't drown! Stay out of flooded roadways.¹⁰
- Never try to walk, swim, or drive through swift water. As little as six inches of rapidly moving water can sweep you off your feet.¹¹

- Respect the “road closed” barrier.
- Stay informed about weather conditions as you are driving.¹²
- Know your area’s flood risk. During rains that have lasted for several hours, be attentive to the chance of flooding.
- Be careful where you camp or park your vehicle along a stream or wash.
- If your vehicle stalls in deep water, leave it and move to higher ground, if you can do so safely.¹³
- Be especially cautious at night when it is difficult to gauge the depth of water at a low water crossing.



What Other Safety Tips Can You Suggest?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- http://fcs.tamu.edu/safety/passenger_safety/youth_traffic_safety.php

¹ The Flood Safety Education Project, *Flood Damage and Fatality Statistics*, <http://www.floodsafety.com/national/life/statistics.htm#biblio>.

² The Flood Safety Education Project, *Flood Damage and Fatality Statistics*, <http://www.floodsafety.com/national/life/statistics.htm#biblio>.

³ Texas Department of Transportation, *Safety Tips – Additional Driving Tips*, <http://www.txdot.gov/safety/tips/other.htm>.

⁴ The Flood Safety Education Project, *Flood Damage and Fatality Statistics*, <http://www.floodsafety.com/national/life/statistics.htm#biblio>.

⁵ The Flood Safety Education Project, *Flood Damage and Fatality Statistics*, <http://www.floodsafety.com/national/life/statistics.htm#biblio>.

⁶ Tex. Transp. Code Ann. § 472.021(a).

⁷ Tex. Transp. Code Ann. §472.022(a).

⁸ Tex. Transp. Code Ann. §472.021(a).

⁹ Tex. Transp. Code Ann. §472.022(a).

¹⁰ Texas Department of Transportation, *Safety Tips – Additional Driving Tips*, <http://www.txdot.gov/safety/tips/other.htm>.

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