



Media Release

Victoria State Emergency Service

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Never enter floodwater: You don't know what you're getting in to

From: Victoria SES

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Victoria State Emergency Service (SES) is using FloodSafe Week (19-25 May) to warn everyone that floodwater is dangerous, disgusting and should never be entered.

Driving through floodwater is the biggest killer of adults in Australian floods. It isn't just drowning that kills. Flood water also contains a range of dangers – dangers that may harm your kids if they play in it.

Floodwater is filthy, toxic and dangerous. By the time water has reached your neighbourhood, it may have picked up all kinds of awful materials including toxic chemicals, animal faeces, decaying animals, garbage, broken glass and twisted metal.

Anyone who comes into contact with floodwater may be exposed to E.Coli infection, diarrhoea, hepatitis, infections and dermatitis to name a few.

Floodwater also washes out roads to create slips and sinkholes, so even seemingly shallow water across a familiar road can pose danger. Floodwater as shallow as the bottom of your car door can sweep away your vehicle, and by then you've already lost control. Don't ever risk driving through floodwater.

Victoria has a long history of flooding, which costs Victorians over \$400 million on average each year and can cause significant damage to homes, businesses and community infrastructure.

FloodSafe Week is an annual initiative of Victoria SES aimed at raising awareness about the risk of flood. SES volunteers will hold a range of events throughout the week to discuss flood preparedness with their local community.

Victoria SES' Chief Executive Officer Stephen Griffin said this year's focus was on shining a light into the murky contents of floodwater.

"Entering floodwater is extremely dangerous. Drivers, parents and children need to be aware of what's in that water and ensure they never enter floodwater," he said.

"Staying out of floodwater is an important part of keeping you and your family safe. Luckily, there are other ways you can prepare yourself, such as having a home emergency kit, knowing what to do and where to find information in an emergency.

"We encourage everyone to use FloodSafe Week as an opportunity to meet their local SES volunteers and learn how they can be prepared for the threat of flood. A little preparation goes a long way and we all need to take responsibility for our safety and learn the local flood risks."

For a full list of FloodSafe Week events, or for information on putting together an emergency kit, visit www.ses.vic.gov.au or www.facebook.com/vicses

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