

From: Becker, Derrec <DBecker@emd.sc.gov>
To: Becker, Derrec DBecker@emd.sc.gov
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Subject: NEWS RELEASE: S.C. Upgrades to OPGON 3, Preps for Severe Flooding



South Carolina Emergency Management Division

Office of the Adjutant General
2779 Fish Hatchery Road, West Columbia, S.C. 29172

Hurricane Joaquin

NEWS RELEASE #4

For Immediate Release

Contact: Derrec Becker | Phone: 803-737-8500 | Social: @SCEMD

State Upgrades to OPGON 3, Preparations Continue for Severe Flooding

COLUMBIA, S.C. (Friday, October 2, 2015, 11:50 a.m.) – At 12:00 p.m., the Division will increase the state's operational condition to Level 3. OpCon3 means a disaster or emergency situation is likely in our state and that state agencies have been notified to staff positions at the State Emergency Operations Center in West Columbia. The SEOC is currently operating on a 24-hour schedule for the duration of the incident.

Forecasters with the National Weather Service predict a record amount of rainfall throughout much of South Carolina, creating the conditions for flash flooding. People in potentially vulnerable areas should review their plans. Residents and visitors in the state should monitor the storm via local news media and through trusted, official, sources online.

"We have already had one death associated with flooding in the Upstate," SCEMD Director Kim Stenson said, "The heaviest rainfall is still to come. All South Carolinians need to be prepared and ready to act upon official instructions from preparedness officials."

When Flooding Occurs in Your Area

- § **Be aware of potential flash flooding.** If there is any possibility of a flash flood, move to higher ground. Do not wait to be told to move.
- § If time allows, **prepare your home for a flood** by moving essential items to an upper floor, bring in outdoor furniture, disconnect electrical appliances and be prepared to turn off the gas, electricity and water.
- § **Do not walk through moving water.** Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- § **Do not drive into flooded areas.** If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle could be quickly swept away. One foot of water can cause your car to float off the roadway.
- § **Be aware of electricity issues.** Don't go into a basement, or any room, if water covers the electrical outlets or if cords are submerged. If you see sparks or hear buzzing, crackling, snapping or popping noises --get out! Stay out of water that may have electricity in it!
- § **Do not walk through flood waters.** It only takes six inches of moving water to knock you off your feet. If you are trapped by moving water, move to the highest possible point and call 911 for help.

-END-

Derrec Becker

Public Information Coordinator

South Carolina Emergency Management Division

Mobile: 803.530.2193 | Office: 803.737.8500

Online: scemd.org | Social: @SCEMD

Skype: SCEmergency

"South Carolina's emergency management program minimizes loss of life and property damage from all-hazard events."

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