

D'Iberville Fire Department Safety Tips

TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN

Subject: Driving in Flood Conditions

- **Avoid already flooded areas, and areas subject to sudden flooding.** Do not attempt to cross flowing streams. Most flood fatalities are caused by people attempting to drive through water, or people playing in high water. The depth of water is not always obvious. The roadbed may be washed out under the water, and you could be stranded or trapped. Rapidly rising water may stall the engine and engulf the vehicle and its occupants, and sweep them away. Look out for flooding at highway dips, bridges, and low areas. Two feet of water will carry away most vehicles.
- **If you are driving and come upon rapidly rising waters remember, TURN AROUND DON'T DROWN. Move to higher ground.** If your route is blocked by flood waters or barricades find another route. Barricades are put up by local officials to protect people from unsafe roads. Driving around barricades is a serious risk and against the law. You could end up being fined or even worse it could cost you your life.
- **If your vehicle becomes surrounded by water or if the engine stalls, and if you can safely get out, abandon your vehicle immediately and climb to higher ground.** Many deaths have resulted from attempts to move stalled vehicles. When the vehicle stalls in water, the water's momentum is transferred to the vehicle. The lateral force of a foot of water moving at 10 miles per hour is about 500 pounds on the average automobile. The greatest effect is buoyancy—for every foot the water rises up the side of a car, it displaces 1,500 pounds of the car's weight. So, two feet of water moving at 10 miles per hour will float virtually any car. Many persons have been swept away by flood waters upon leaving vehicles, which are later found without much damage. Use caution when abandoning your vehicle, and look for an opportunity to move away quickly and safely to higher ground.