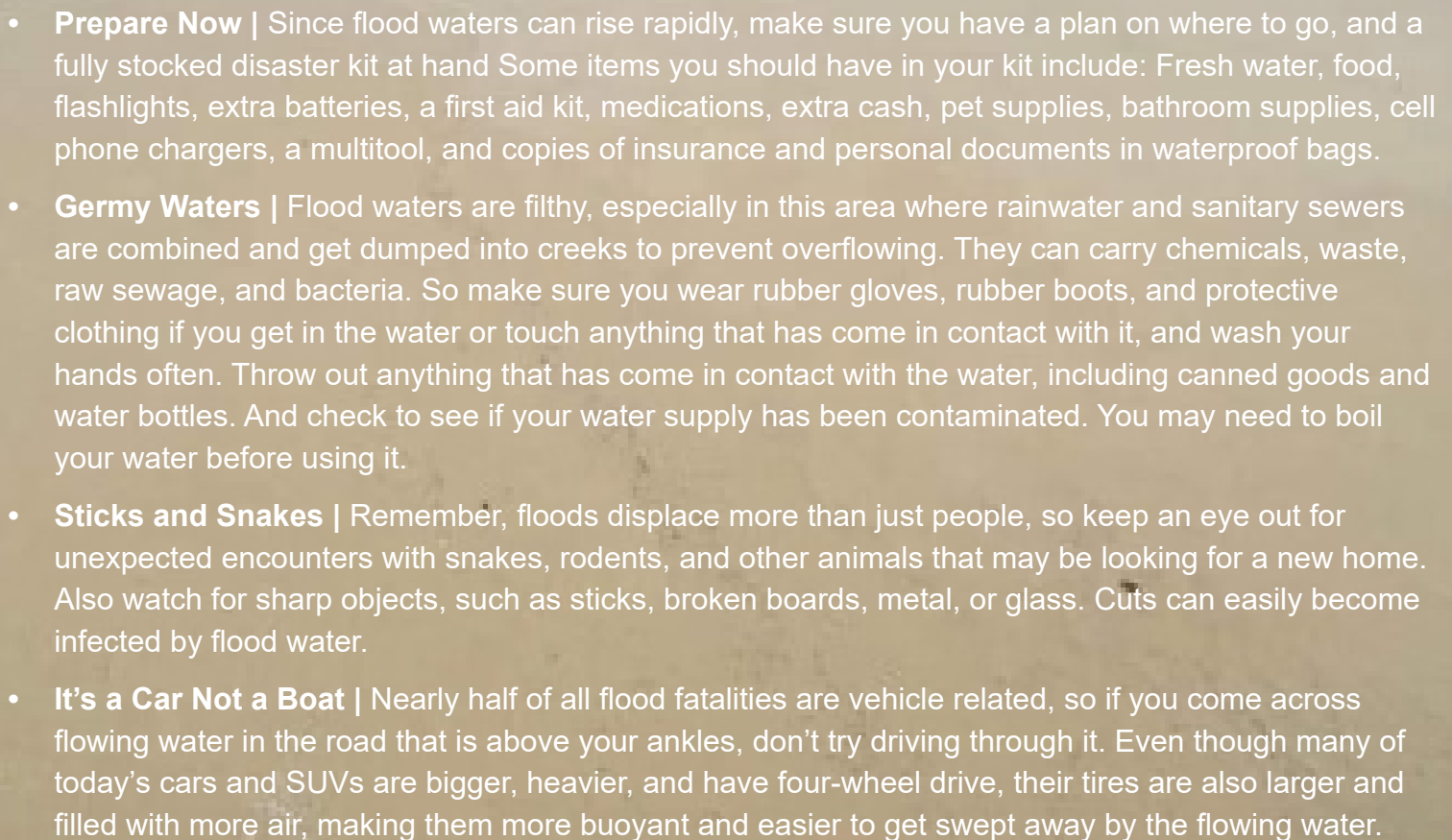


HOW TO STAY SAFE & HEALTHY AFTER A *Flood*

Each Spring, as the snow melts and rain drenches the region, the deluge of water pours into our streams and rivers, eventually pushing its way up and over the banks and flooding towns, cities, and everything in its path. Floods are the most common natural disaster in our area, and they create their own unique challenges with health and safety. Here are a few tips to help you when the rivers rise.

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- **Prepare Now** | Since flood waters can rise rapidly, make sure you have a plan on where to go, and a fully stocked disaster kit at hand. Some items you should have in your kit include: Fresh water, food, flashlights, extra batteries, a first aid kit, medications, extra cash, pet supplies, bathroom supplies, cell phone chargers, a multitool, and copies of insurance and personal documents in waterproof bags.
 - **Germy Waters** | Flood waters are filthy, especially in this area where rainwater and sanitary sewers are combined and get dumped into creeks to prevent overflowing. They can carry chemicals, waste, raw sewage, and bacteria. So make sure you wear rubber gloves, rubber boots, and protective clothing if you get in the water or touch anything that has come in contact with it, and wash your hands often. Throw out anything that has come in contact with the water, including canned goods and water bottles. And check to see if your water supply has been contaminated. You may need to boil your water before using it.
 - **Sticks and Snakes** | Remember, floods displace more than just people, so keep an eye out for unexpected encounters with snakes, rodents, and other animals that may be looking for a new home. Also watch for sharp objects, such as sticks, broken boards, metal, or glass. Cuts can easily become infected by flood water.
 - **It's a Car Not a Boat** | Nearly half of all flood fatalities are vehicle related, so if you come across flowing water in the road that is above your ankles, don't try driving through it. Even though many of today's cars and SUVs are bigger, heavier, and have four-wheel drive, their tires are also larger and filled with more air, making them more buoyant and easier to get swept away by the flowing water.