



Dealing safely with flooded roads

Floodwaters can conceal many hidden dangers

The Facts

- Flowing water just one foot deep could be enough to move the average family car [1]
- In water three feet deep, a current running at just 4mph is enough to sweep you off your feet [1]
- 32% of all flood-related deaths are by drowning in a vehicle [1]
- In 2013 The AA's Special Operations Response Team came to the assistance of some 4,000 drivers stranded in floodwater [1]
- A mere egg cupful of water ingested by an engine is sufficient to wreck it [1]

The Advice

- If flooding is extensive, is that journey really necessary at all? If the journey is vital, can you complete it by public transport instead?
- If you have to travel by car, listen to traffic reports and choose a route which avoids flooded sections of road
- Never attempt to enter a flooded section of road unless you know its depth. If you have no option but to take that route, go into the water with a stick or pole to check the depth first. Check for kerb stones, as they might help identify the depth
- Avoid any water level over about 6-9 inches, as it's likely to enter through the car door seals and you risk extensive damage to carpets. Catalytic converters and clutch components are also vulnerable
- Never attempt to enter water that is fast flowing. The power of a current is deceptive. Once the vehicle is moved by a fast flowing current, it may be impossible to stop and you will have no control over where you end up
- If you decide to enter static water, keep the speed down to avoid creating a bow wave and water entering the engine
- Avoid entering the water if another vehicle is coming towards you. Its wash, or bow wave, could damage your vehicle
- If you get swept into deeper water and the vehicle starts to sink, take deep breaths and keep calm. It's critical not to panic. Remove your seat belt. Lower the door window to allow water IN. If you can, use the window to exit the vehicle. If it's too small, allow the vehicle to fill more to equalise the water pressure, at which point you should be able to force the door open and make your escape. Take a deep breath at the last minute while there is still an air pocket. Never attempt to retrieve anything else except yourself

Sources [1] The Automobile Association 2013