

# Be prepared

## *Electrical Safety in Floods*

Floods are common in Kentucky during the heavy rains of springtime—and they can occur during any season.

One of the main dangers from floods is electrocution. Water and electricity don't mix! Here are some tips for protecting yourself.

### *Before a Flood*

- ◆ Prepare an emergency kit that includes waterproof boots or waders, a dry wooden stick to flip circuit breakers, and rubber gloves.
- ◆ Make sure the electrical circuit breakers or fuses are clearly marked for each area of your home or business.
- ◆ If high water is approaching, turn off the electricity at the main circuit breaker or fuse box—but only if you don't have to stand in water or on a wet floor to do so. At the very least, stand on a dry board wearing rubber boots; use a dry stick to flip the breakers. After you turn off the main electrical breaker or disconnect the main fuse, flip each individual circuit switch to the “off” position or remove the individual fuses.
- ◆ Unplug appliances—but again, only if you don't have to stand in water. If possible you should move larger appliances such as washing machines to a higher floor, or place them on concrete blocks.

### *During a Flood*

- ◆ Don't go into any room if water is covering appliance cords that are plugged in or if water has reached the wall outlets.
- ◆ Don't enter a room if you hear popping or buzzing, or if you see sparks.
- ◆ If your main electrical box is covered with water, call your utility company.
- ◆ Keep children away from wall sockets, appliances, cords and power lines.
- ◆ If you see downed power lines, call your utility company or the police.

### *After a Flood*

OVER

- ◆ Before you enter a flooded building or basement, make certain the electricity is off. If it hasn't been turned off, or if you're not sure, call an electrician or your utility company. Don't go in!
- ◆ After the water has receded, again make sure the power to your building is turned off, then take the covers off outlets and unplug all appliances. Allow them to dry for several days. Also dry and clean all wet motors.
- ◆ If your furnace was flooded, have it inspected by a qualified electrician.
- ◆ Don't use damaged lights or electrical appliances until an electrician has checked them. The electrical parts can become grounded and pose a shock hazard, or overheat and cause a fire.
- ◆ Be careful around downed tree limbs. They can conduct electricity from wet or broken power lines.
- ◆ When using a "wet-dry vacuum cleaner," follow the manufacturer's instructions. Don't allow the power cord connections to become wet. Don't remove or bypass the ground pin on the three-prong plug.

*Sources: Moorhead (Minn.) Public Service; Federal Emergency Management Agency; U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission; Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada.*