

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Lee County Emergency Management encourages caution during downpours

Fort Myers, FL, Aug. 19, 2015 — Lee County Emergency Management urges motorists to use caution when commuting during afternoon thunderstorms.

Large amounts of rainfall from thunderstorms can cause flash flooding, and urban areas are especially prone to flash flooding because of large amounts of concrete and asphalt surfaces. These sudden downpours can rapidly change the water levels on roadways. Monitor the NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards or your favorite news source for vital weather related information.

If you encounter flooded roadways during a heavy rain or thunderstorm – do not drive through the water. Attempt to find an alternate route around the flooded roadway, or safely pull off the road into a parking lot and wait out the storm.

Please do not call 911 to report the flooding. Calling 911 should be reserved for immediate emergencies such as fires, crime, car crashes and other serious medical emergencies.

Emergency Management also offers these tips for driving during heavy rain:

- Before you drive, check the weather forecast.
- When you turn your wipers on, make sure to turn your lights on.
- Slow down. It takes longer to stop in wet weather.
- Never drive beyond the limits of your visibility.
- Do not use your hazard lights unless your vehicle is stopped and the ignition is off.
- Don't drive along the outer edges of road or shoulder; water tends to pool in these areas.
- Do not follow large trucks or buses too closely.
- Avoid roads already flooded and roads with moving water.
- Roads may be washed out under flood waters.
- Be especially cautious when driving at night when it is more difficult to recognize flood dangers.
- Turn around if you encounter a flooded road.

- If possible, stay off the road during heavy thunderstorms. It's better to be late getting somewhere than to put yourself at risk.