



# CHEROKEE COUNTY COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Centre, AL, December 28, 2015 – Several inches of rain have fallen over the past few days causing streams, rivers, and Weiss Lake to escape their banks. Flood waters have already caused damage to several roadways, vehicles, docks, boats, and other structures around the area. States of Emergencies were declared by both the State of Alabama and the Cherokee County Commission on December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The flooding is a serious threat and should not be taken lightly.

According to Alabama Power, Weiss Lake is expected to crest at 568 feet on Wednesday, December 30, which is over a foot higher than the current lake level at flood stage of 567 feet. If you or a loved one live in a location that is likely to flood, please make an effort to evacuate the area until the water recedes. Rising flood waters are unpredictable and can leave you stranded in a matter of minutes.

Please understand that when you put yourself at risk of being stranded, you also put the lives of Cherokee County's first responders at risk, as well. Our first responders go above and beyond the call of duty to ensure the safety of the citizens of Cherokee County.

Please follow these safety tips during and after a flood.

## **During a Flood**

- Do not walk through moving water. As little as 6 inches (15 centimeters) of moving water can make you fall.
- If you have to walk in water, wherever possible, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- Do not drive into flooded areas. If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground if you can do so safely.
- Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

## After a Flood

- Listen for news reports to learn whether the community's water supply is safe to drink.
- Avoid floodwaters; water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage. Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
- Avoid moving water.
- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- Stay away from downed power lines, and report them to the power company.
- Return home only when authorities indicate it is safe.
- Stay out of any building if it is surrounded by floodwaters.
- Service damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits, and leaching systems as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are serious health hazards.
- Clean and disinfect everything that got wet. Mud left from floodwater can contain sewage and chemicals.

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