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## AMAFCA URGES AWARENESS OF THE DANGERS OF MONSOON SEASON

### *Flash Flooding can be dangerous*

The Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority (AMAFCA) urges caution in and around the area's arroyos, ditches, and channels as we enter Monsoon Season (June 15<sup>th</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>). Changes in New Mexico's typical weather pattern can lead to sudden intense thunderstorms that can often put the population at risk for serious injury or death. Since 1959, 65 New Mexicans have lost their lives in flash floods statewide. For fatalities where information is available, 66% of them occurred in a car.

Flash floods usually occur within six hours of heavy rainfall and are normally the most dangerous of floods. Even when there is blue sky overhead, a dry arroyo may suddenly fill with water if there has been a storm upstream.

To keep yourself safe, stay informed of weather forecasts and warnings for severe weather storm conditions, both in your area and in the surrounding area. When the National Weather Service (NWS) issues a flash flood **watch**, it means that conditions are favorable for thunderstorms to occur which may lead to flash floods. Exercise caution and do not enter arroyos if thunderclouds are visible in your area or upstream. Watch for signs of rising water, and be prepared to flee to higher ground on a moment's notice.

If the NWS issues a flash flood **warning**, it means that a flash flood is occurring or is imminent. Get out of the danger zone by moving to higher ground immediately. Don't waste time trying to save personal property. Do not cross rain-swollen arroyos, channels, or streams. Act quickly, as your margin of safety may be counted in seconds. Do not walk or wade into the arroyo – as little as six inches of rapidly moving water can sweep you off your feet and carry you downstream.

Above all, do not attempt to drive over a flooded road. The depth of the water is not always obvious. The road bed may be washed out under the water, and you could be stranded or trapped. Even one foot of fast-moving water can wash your car off the road and into the arroyo. As the NWS urges, "[Turn Around, Don't Drown](#)."

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If you would like additional information about this topic, or to schedule an interview, please contact Jerry Lovato at 884-2215 or email Jerry at [JLovato@AMAFCA.ORG](mailto:JLovato@AMAFCA.ORG).