Know the Flow: Types of Flooding that may Affect Your Community

New Hampshire Flood Safety Awareness Week | **#NHFloodWeek**
New Hampshire Floodplain Management Program

Flooding is the most common and costly type of disaster in New Hampshire. Spring is typically when flooding is most expected, but as many New Hampshire residents have experienced first-hand, flooding can occur any time of the year. Knowing the flood hazards that affect your community is the first step in understanding your flood risk.

Some or all of these types of flooding may affect your community:

- **Riverine flooding** happens when water overtops the banks of a river or its tributary streams. Riverine flooding is usually the result of heavy or long periods of rainfall and/or rapid snow melt.

- **Coastal flooding** occurs along the Seacoast and nearby marshes, bays, and tidally influenced rivers. It can result from storms, and include storm surge and the effects of large waves. Sea level rise is also a factor contributing to more frequent and severe coastal flooding.

- A **flash flood** is a flood that happens within six hours or less of the start of heavy rainfall or another event such as a dam or levee failure, or the rapid release from an ice jam. Flash floods are largely unpredictable and their damage is not always confined to areas along rivers and streams.

Coastal Flooding, Seabrook, October 2016 (Source: Kellie Walsh)

- **Shallow flooding** occurs in flat areas where a lack of stream capacity means water cannot drain away easily. Shallow flooding can result in water collecting floodplains, low-lying urbanized areas, and other places with drainage problems.

- **Ice Jams** happen when ice anchors to stream bed and banks, or when ice chunks are carried along a river or stream, blocking the flow of water. This may cause flooding to low-lying areas upstream or, if the ice jam breaks up suddenly after water backs up behind it, flash flooding may happen downstream too.

Learn more about New Hampshire Flood Safety Awareness Week.
Visit FloodSmart.gov to learn more about flood insurance.
Visit ReadyNH.gov to learn how to be ready when a flood happens.

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