

A large silhouette of a person sitting at a desk and using a laptop. The person's head and shoulders are in the upper left, and their hands are on the laptop keyboard. The laptop screen is a large rectangle. The background is a solid blue color.

SIGN UP
FOR

FLOOD
ALERTS

SIGN UP FOR FLOOD ALERTS

Are you Flood Alert?

Having advance notice of flood events can provide you with critical extra time to prepare your belongings and evacuate. The National Weather Service has new technology to notify you when a flood watch or warning is in effect. These "flood alerts" are available to your Internet browser, email or, in some instances, your cell phone. Using the increasingly common "RSS feed" technology, you can sign up to receive notice of the river levels on a daily basis, or only when flood watches or warnings are put into effect. These tools can share with you predictions of flood levels (i.e., how high the river will get) as well as flood timing (i.e., how high it will be at a certain time of day).

To sign up for alerts, you will first need to identify the stream gage nearest you. You can do that at <http://water.weather.gov/ahps>.

The "river level" is the current height of the water at each gage, and this number changes constantly. But each gage also has a "flood stage" level, which is the height at which the river begins to flood, and this number is constant. Once you zoom in and find the gage nearest you, click on the button for that gage, and you will see a "hydrograph," or a chart that shows you current river levels, and notes where flood stage is for that gage. On this page, there is also a button marked "RSS." Clicking on that button will allow you sign up for an RSS feed that will provide you with daily observed river levels, forecast levels (if available in your area), or "alerts."

If a flood is predicted in your area, the hydrograph will also show you predicted flood levels and timing. It is a good idea to bookmark this page and check it regularly during times when the river level is rising or expected to flood. Remember: National Weather Service employees themselves say not to wait until a formal "Flood Warning" is issued to start getting prepared for a flood. That may be too late. Instead, keep abreast of river levels, so you have plenty of time to prepare your belongings and evacuate if needed.

www.focusonfloods.org

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