# HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM ELECTRICAL HAZARDS FOLLOWING A NATURAL DISASTER

**After a hurricane, flood or other natural disaster you need to be careful to avoid electrical hazards both in your home and elsewhere.**

Never touch a fallen power line. Call the power company to report fallen power lines.

- Avoid contact with overhead power lines during cleanup and other activities.
- Do not drive through standing water if downed powerlines are in the water.
- If a powerline falls across your car while you are driving, stay inside the vehicle and continue to drive away from the line. If the engine stalls, do not turn off the ignition. Warn people not to touch the car or the line. Call or ask someone to call the local utility company and emergency services. Do not allow anyone other than emergency personnel to approach your vehicle.
- If electrical circuits and electrical equipment have gotten wet or are in or near water, turn off the power at the main breaker or fuse on the service panel. Do not enter standing water to access the main power switch. Call an electrician to turn it off.
- Never turn power on or off yourself or use an electric tool or appliance while standing in water. Do not turn the power back on until electrical equipment has been inspected by a qualified electrician. All electrical equipment and appliances must be completely dry before returning them to service. Have a certified electrician check these items if there is any question.
- If you see frayed wiring or sparks when you restore power, or if there is an odor of something burning but no visible fire, you should immediately shut off the electrical system at the main circuit breaker.
- Consult your utility company about using electrical equipment, including power generators. Do not connect generators to your home's electrical circuits without the approved, automatic-interrupt devices. If a generator is on line when electrical service is restored, it can become a major fire hazard and it may endanger line workers helping to restore power in your area.

If you believe someone has been electrocuted take the following steps:

1. Look first. Don't touch. The person may still be in contact with the electrical source. Touching the person may pass the current through you.
2. Call or have someone else call 911 or emergency medical help.
3. Turn off the source of electricity if possible. If not, move the source away from you and the affected person using a nonconducting object made of cardboard, plastic or wood.
4. Once the person is free of the source of electricity, check the person's breathing and pulse. If either has stopped or seems dangerously slow or shallow, begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) immediately.
5. If the person is faint or pale or shows other signs of shock, lay him or her down with the head slightly lower than the trunk of the body and the legs elevated.
6. Don't touch burns, break blisters, or remove burned clothing. Electrical shock may cause burns inside the body, so be sure the person is taken to a doctor.

For additional information on disaster planning and recovery, go to the Arkansas Department of Health website at ***www.healthy.arkansas.gov*** or call toll-free at ***1-800-462-0599*** or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at ***http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/workers.aspdc.gov/disasters***

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