



Midwest States at High Risk for Spring Flooding

In 2019, states in the Midwest were hit hard by flooding with many areas still recovering. With soil above normal saturation rates and a wet winter, fear is rising that the spring of 2020 could potentially see high water once again in places that still haven't fully recovered. Floods present obvious hazards, but even after the water has receded, there are still a number of hazards associated with cleanup activities. Workers responding to flooded areas face the highest risk, but can protect themselves by being prepared.

Safety during a flood

- Do not drive or walk across flooded roads. Nearly half of all flood fatalities are vehicle-related. Six inches of standing water is enough to stall some cars. A foot of water can float a vehicle. Two feet of moving water could sweep a car away.
- Follow evacuation orders. If evacuation appears necessary, turn off utilities at the manpower switch and close the main gas valve.
- Never touch electrical equipment if it is wet or you're standing in water. Power should be shut off at the main breaker. If you are unable to access the main power switch without standing in water, then call an electrician to shut it off.

Safety after a flood

Beware of chemical and biological hazards that may be present in floodwaters. Due to contamination from untreated raw sewage, dead animals, rotting food, etc, contact with floodwaters should be avoided if possible. If any open cuts or sores are exposed to floodwater, wash them with soap and apply an antibiotic ointment to discourage infection.

Mold is an obvious hazard after flood waters recede. Make sure work areas are well ventilated, especially when using bleach to clean up mold. Use protection for your hands and eyes as well as respiratory protection such as an N-95 respirator.

Have an evacuation plan in place before a flood occurs.

What should you have in your evacuation plan?

- Conditions that will activate the plan
- Chain of command
- Emergency functions and who will perform them
- Specific evacuation procedures, including routes and exits
- Procedures for accounting for personnel, customers and visitors
- Equipment for personnel
- Review the plan with workers

For more information on creating an Emergency Action Plan Check out [OSHA's Evacuation Plans and Procedures eTool!](#)

Additional Info: [Be Prepared for Flood](#); [Protecting Employees from the Hazards of Flooding](#); [OSHA Flood Preparedness](#);

Coronavirus Disease 2019

Find the latest resources and information at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

Symptoms of COVID-19 can include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person. If you are sick and suspect you are infected with the virus you should stay home, except to get medical care. Wear a face mask and call ahead before visiting your doctor so the provider's office can take steps to keep others from becoming exposed. To help prevent the spread of infection cover your coughs and sneezes, wash your hands often with soap and water, and clean all "high-touch" surfaces daily.

Employers should follow the interim guidance for businesses posted to [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

Heartland Center Students Dare To...

Each year, the University of Iowa Office of the Vice President for Research showcases research from across the university through their Dare to Discover campaign. This year, three Heartland Center Trainees were selected to showcase their research.



**Kathryn Crawford, Ph.D. student,
Occupational and Environmental
Health**

Protects musicians' hearing

Please describe your research: I work with music instructors to find ways to conserve their hearing without compromising their ability to teach and perform. Musicians typically experience highly variable levels of sound, some of which are loud enough to cause hearing damage. Because there is a lot of variability in their sound exposure, and they need to hear well at all times, we need to find the right combination of protection strategies (earplugs, acoustic treatments, schedule adjustments) that can be used to reduce their risk of hearing loss.



**Robyn Espinosa, Graduate student,
Occupational and Environmental
Health**

Sheds light on childhood trauma

Please describe your research: I am working to better understand how children's past traumas and experiences shape their risks of being prone to deviant and antisocial behaviors leading some to be repeat juvenile offenders. Essentially, showing whether or not direct childhood adversity and community adversity have an effect on the success of juvenile justice programming for rehabilitation.



**Priyanka Vakkalanka, Ph.D. student,
Epidemiology**

Improves veterans' healthcare

Please describe your research: I study mental health care and delivery of services in veterans and the general US population. At this point, I am investigating medication-assisted therapies on health outcomes among veterans with substance use dependence.



April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month!

Car crashes are the #1 cause of workplace deaths and distracted driving is the leading factor in road fatalities. Approximately 40,000 people were killed by motor vehicle fatalities in 2018. With today's technology, it is more important now than ever for individuals and companies to do something about distracted driving. In an effort to make our roads safer, the National Safety Council has declared April as Distracted Driving Awareness Month.



Follow National Safety Council on social media during the month of April for more information on the #justdrive campaign.

Registration is Open for Hawkeye on Safety 2020!

The Hawkeye on Safety annual conference provides life-saving health and safety information to workers from all industries. We offer key networking opportunities that you need to keep current in occupational safety standards and trends. We provide essential training to the professionals responsible for workplace health and safety with a unique focus on providing practical training to rank-and-file workers, so that they can become safety leaders in their workplaces and communities. We hope that you'll join us for our next conference on August 27, 2020.

[Visit hawkeyeonsafety.com for more information!](http://hawkeyeonsafety.com)

Looking for more resources? [Distracted Driving Awareness Month](#); [Distracted Driving](#); [CDC on Distracted Driving](#); [University of Iowa Dare to Discover](#); [Heartland Center Trainees Featured in Dare to Discover Campaign](#)

Have You Signed Up for MidwestOn?

The Heartland Center has launched the MidwestON Listserv to help facilitate the future development of a formalized Midwest Occupational Network (MidwestON) for Midwest states (IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MO, OH, and WI).

The goal of the Listserv is to build state-based occupational safety and health (OSH) capacity by promoting multi-state collaborations and other activities among public health departments, community partners, occupational epidemiologists, worker-related nonprofits, worker organizations, NIOSH, NIOSH-funded Centers, and academic institutions within the Midwest region.

[Join the email list today!](#)

Join the National Safety Stand-Down to Prevent Falls in Construction May 4-8, 2020



Falls from elevation are a leading cause of death for construction employees. The National Safety Stand-Down is an effort to raise fall hazard awareness and save lives. Join the safety stand-down by taking a break to discuss the dangers of fall hazards and the importance of fall prevention with you colleagues May 4-8, 2020. Even if your workplace is not subject to fall hazards, this is a great opportunity to discuss other hazards that do affect your colleagues. [Learn more at the OSHA event website.](#)

Free Webinar: Creative Use of Direct Reading Instruments

April 7, 2020 | Presented By: Tom Peters, PhD, CIH
12 - 1 PM (PST) | 2 - 3 PM (CST) | 3 - 4 PM (EST)

During this webinar, Dr. Peters will present on the use of direct reading instruments to assess workplace exposures. He will discuss various methods to handle data, such as hazard mapping and analysis of time-series data. The presentation will blend education and literature review.

Tom Peters, PhD, CIH, is the director of the industrial hygiene program at The Heartland Center for Occupational Health and Safety.

[Find more information at coeh.berkeley.edu/20ihw0407](http://coeh.berkeley.edu/20ihw0407)



Continuing Education Programs

Check out the Heartland Center's online events calendar at HeartlandERC.org to keep track of our upcoming continuing education events.

Follow the Heartland Center on social media for regular occupational health and safety updates:

 **Facebook**
facebook.com/HeartlandCenterERC/

 **Twitter**
twitter.com/heartlandcntr

 **LinkedIn**
linkedin.com/groups/8420341

 **Instagram**
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**Our Quarterly
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