

Flood Victims: Beware Electrical Dangers

(NAPSA)—In the aftermath of hurricanes and floods, you may not be focused on electrical safety. Yet, you should be aware of the potential dangers when water comes in contact with electricity, notes the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI).

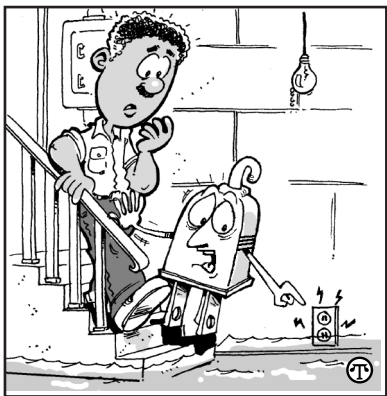
“As families begin to clean up following a flood, there may be electrical hazards still hidden throughout the home,” says Michael G. Clendenin, executive director of the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI). A flood can cause tragic losses to families, but to protect against further dangers, ESFI has some important safety advice:

- Take care when stepping into a flooded basement; be aware that submerged outlets or electrical cords may be energizing the water, a potential lethal trap.

- Do not use electrical appliances that have been wet. Water can damage the motors in electrical appliances, such as furnaces, freezers, refrigerators, washing machines and dryers.

- If electrical appliances have been under water, have them dried out and reconditioned by a qualified service repairman. Do not turn on damaged electrical appliances because the electrical parts can become grounded and pose an electric shock hazard, or overheat and cause a fire.

- Before flipping a switch or plugging in an appliance, have an electrician check the house wiring



and appliance to make sure it is safe to use.

- Use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to help prevent electrocutions and electrical shock injuries. Portable GFCIs require no tools to install and are available at prices ranging from \$12 to \$30.

- Electrical items such as circuit breakers, fuses, GFCIs, receptacles, plugs and switches can malfunction when water and silt get inside. Discard them when they have been submerged.

- When using a wet-dry vacuum cleaner or a pressure washer be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid electric shock.

- Do not allow power cord connections to become wet. Do not remove or bypass the ground pin on the three-prong plug.

These and other electrical safety tips and resources are available at the Foundation's Web site at www.electrical-safety.org or call (703) 841-3229.