

# VAN BUREN COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

# NEWS RELEASE

BETTER HIGHWAYS: SAVE LIVES, SAVE TIME, SAVE MONEY

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| Lawrence, Michigan   | 2008 #7   |
| DATE: June 10, 2008  | CONTACT: Lawrence B. Hummel, P.E.<br>Engineer-Manager<br>Van Buren County Road Commission<br>Post Office Box 156<br>Lawrence, Michigan 49064<br>PHONE: (269) 674-8011 |
| RELEASE: Immediately |   |

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## ROAD COMMISSION REMINDS DRIVERS OF DANGER FROM FLOODING

### ***THE ROAD COMMISSION WANTS YOU TO KNOW . . .***

The Van Buren County Road Commission issued a reminder to drivers to be alert and consider the danger caused by water over the road.

"When the ground is saturated from rainstorms, water can rapidly accumulate on roadways making driving conditions difficult, to say the least", said Lawrence Hummel, Road Commission Engineer-Manager. "It is often difficult to distinguish between water over the road, and pavement at dusk, or in darkness. Water over the road, at any depth, can hide dangers such as washed out pavement, or storm debris".

The Road Commission asks drivers to keep the following tips in mind:

- o Even a small layer of water over the road can cause vehicles to hydroplane leading to loss of traction and loss of control.
- o Keeping culverts and drainage ditches clear of obstructions will help keep water off road surfaces. Report any such obstructions as soon as possible to the Van Buren County Road Commission.
- o From dusk to dawn following a heavy rainstorm, drivers should avoid low areas where water collects over the road.
- o When roads are closed due to water over the road, DO NOT ignore these important signs.
- o As little as six inches of moving water is enough to carry away a small vehicle.
- o If your vehicle stalls in moving water, experts recommend abandoning the vehicle, being careful not to step into a flooded ditch.

Other factors to consider regarding a flood, or potential flood conditions are the following:

- o "Flood Watch" means that there has been enough rainfall to cause potential flooding.
- o "Flood Warning" means some level of flooding has been confirmed.
- o "Flash Flood" means that the water can rise quickly, without warning, making driving very dangerous.

These tips will assist you whether you're traveling across Van Buren County, Southwest Michigan, or across the country. Hummel said, "Remember, your life and the life of your passengers depend on your heeding water over the road and "Road Closed" signs, and making safe driving decisions!"