



**Governor's Office of  
Homeland Security &  
Emergency Preparedness**

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**JOINT INFORMATION CENTER**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 17, 2011

State of Louisiana News Desk #: 225.358.5361

**Officials Urge Residents to Take Caution  
During and After Flood, Remain Alert for  
Snakes**

**BATON ROUGE, La.** - The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) is advising residents living, working, or traversing in flood-impacted areas to remain on the lookout for venomous snakes. Snakes may move into residential and commercial areas as flood waters drive them from their habitat.

High water in the Morganza-Atchafalaya floodway may displace snakes. Of the 22 species of snakes that occur within the spillway, three are venomous: the Copperhead, the Cottonmouth and the Canebrake Rattlesnake. Residents and workers in that area should use caution when working in post-flood conditions. If bitten by a venomous snake, proceed as quickly as possible to the nearest hospital or medical center. As a precaution, residents should be aware of the nearest medical facility that is capable of treating a venomous snake bite.

Residents can take a few key steps to help prevent snake encounters and bites before, during and after the flood event:

- Seal any gaps in doorways or windows that would allow a snake to enter your residence or office.
- Be careful about where one steps or places hands.
- Wear sturdy leather or rubber boots when in a flood-impacted area to protect feet, ankles and lower legs from snake bites.
- Do not allow children or pets into flooded or partially flooded outdoor areas.
- After flood waters recede, exercise extreme caution when returning to your residence or business to salvage possessions. Snakes may remain in flooded areas and pose a safety threat.

If bitten by a venomous snake, residents should call Louisiana Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222 and seek immediate medical treatment at the nearest hospital.

A venomous snake bite is typically characterized by visible puncture wounds. Residents should immediately get away from the snake. If possible, remember physical characteristics that may help Poison Control identify the snake. Snake bites from venomous snakes normally secrete a clear, bloody fluid.

Experts with Poison Control will follow patients through the treatment process by calling emergency rooms in advance to prepare physicians and nurses on staff for the snake bite and to advise on possible treatment.

For more information on snake species found in Louisiana, including frequently asked questions, click here: [www.wlf.louisiana.gov/resource/snakes-louisiana](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/resource/snakes-louisiana).

For questions about snakes, or any other wildlife species that endanger human health or safety, call the following LDWF field offices at:

- Baton Rouge 225-765-2800
- Hammond 985-543-4777
- Monroe 318-343-4044
- New Iberia 337-373-0032
- Opelousas 337-948-0255
- Pineville 318-487-5885

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is charged with managing and protecting Louisiana's abundant natural resources. For more information, visit us at [www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov) on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ldwffb](https://www.facebook.com/ldwffb) or follow us on Twitter @LDWF.

*For emergency updates from the State of Louisiana, visit*

*emergency.louisiana.gov or follow along on Twitter at @GOHSEP and  
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