

# Pennsylvania Flash Flood – July 2023

15th July, 2023 Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Extreme rainfall led to 5 fatalities during a creek flash flood that overwhelmed road users. Upper Makefield fire authorities specifically addressed the fact that the flood wave had hit the cars unexpectedly on the road. Over 33mm (1.29 inches) was recorded in an unofficial gauge, at the head of the catchment in 5 minutes. Officials advised 177mm (7 inches) had occurred in 45 minutes. (Washington Post)



Credit : K Paynter (PBS)

## Resources available

- Rainfall data – unofficial
- Media coverage

## Useful to

- Disaster & emergency managers
- Policy makers
- Boards
- Managers

Do we have a policy for enterprise vehicles and flood waters?

How do we rely on forecasts? How are they used? Is there a risk if observed conditions are different?

Are staff trained in actions to take in a rapidly developing flash flood situation?



Have we leveraged technology to maximum advantage for stakeholder communications and warning?

Have we scenario tested emerging risks relevant to climate change in our catchments?

## Learnings Checklist

Category	Event	Learning/prevention activity	Question?
Community Safety and Occupational Health and Safety	Road inundated with high velocity flows in a very short period. Cars were washed away	Rain event was intense enough for cars to be caught by the flood without driving through. This is a new reality in climate change as more intense storms occur more frequently.	Are our people/community educated for fast developing flood situations?
Community Safety and Occupational Health and Safety	Road inundated with high velocity flows in a very short period. Cars were washed away	(Not known if occurred) but there is an increasing risk of being trapped in cars during flood situations. Electric cars are an emerging risk.	Does our fleet/my vehicle have a way of breaking the windows in a serious situation?