



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 20 NOVEMBER 2008

ROYAL LIFE SAVING QUEENSLAND ISSUES URGENT FLOOD WARNING

The Royal Life Saving Society Queensland is issuing an urgent warning to avoid all unnecessary travel in flood affected areas in Queensland during the extreme weather conditions following the tragic drowning death of a woman at Forest Hill today.

Media reports indicate the woman and her husband were attempting to cross a flooded causeway when their car was swept away by floodwaters this morning.

“In wild weather like this, there is a huge risk to people driving through areas affected by the floods. The water level doesn’t have to look deep for the sheer force of the water to dislodge cars from roadways. Cars can be swept away in less than 50cm of water,” Royal Life Saving Society Queensland Executive Director Michael Darben said.

“Today’s tragedy is a reminder that in extreme weather conditions you just can’t afford to take risks crossing roadways. Nothing is more important than your life.

“On average, 10 people die each year while trying to cross flooded roadways. From the heavy deluge we have seen localised flooding, water across roads and new water sources emerging which all pose a potential drowning threat.

“You may think it is ok and want to save time by driving over a flooded road or causeway but you run the risk of being trapped in rising waters or swept away in your car.”

Royal Life Saving recommends the following when driving in areas with water over the road:

- Where possible, avoid roads prone to flooding.
- Be mindful of flood warning signs and flood level indicators.
- Where there is water across the road, check the level and speed of the water before entry. Also check that the road has not been washed away.
- Crossing flooded bridges and causeways is dangerous and should not be attempted.
- Check with Police and Emergency services about road conditions before you set out.
- Listen to the local radio station for reports about localised flooding.

Royal Life Saving drowning statistics are primarily collected from the National Coroners Information System (NCIS).

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