

Dam failure or levee breaches can occur with little warning. Intense storms may produce a flood in a few hours or even a few minutes for upstream locations. Flash floods can occur within six hours of the beginning of heavy rainfall, and dam failure may occur within hours of the first signs of breaching. The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality enforces dam safety statutes and regulations in the state.

Dam Classifications: All regulated dams are placed into one of three hazard classifications based on the threat to life and property downstream, should dam failure occur.

- High Hazard - Dam failure may cause loss of life, serious damage to homes, industrial or commercial buildings, important public utilities, main highways or railroads.
- Significant Hazard – Dam failure may cause significant damage to main roads, minor railroads, or cause interruption of use or service of relatively important public utilities.
- Low Hazard – Dam failure may cause damage to farm buildings (excluding residences), agricultural land or county or minor roads.

If there is a dam failure or imminent dam failure and you need to evacuate, know your evacuation route and get out of harm's way.