

Mother Nature and Human Nature

How people perceive, react to, and try to
manage risk from natural disasters

Delaware Recommended Curriculum
Humans Interact with the Environment-Lesson 2

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“Mother Nature” can be hard to deal with.



Her fury can be sudden and concentrated...



Or slow and widespread.



Either way, it can leave us with loss of property, loss of life,



and a mess to clean up!



Recent floods in the Midwest left us wondering...



Why did this happen?

- Whose fault is it that the levees failed?
- Why were so many people affected?
- Could this have been prevented?
- Is this the beginning of a trend - perhaps caused by climate change?

Sometimes government or media warnings can be confusing, or people don't take them seriously.



People tend to -

- **Underestimate the risk of natural hazards**
- **Overestimate our abilities to predict, control or deal with dangerous situations.**

People tend to-

- **Underestimate the importance of personal response and preparedness**
- **Overestimate the ability of government and agencies to come to their aid.**

Experience tells us that floods happen periodically, so why rebuild?



Some reasons given for rebuilding in the same place:

- “We have too much invested here to leave.”
- “I am a fisherman, miner, or farmer - I make my living here.”
- “All my family and friends are here.”
- “Chances are, it won’t happen again.”

Governments, businesses, and households should plan wisely

- **Before a disaster** - gather and store supplies, be aware of danger, evacuate if asked
- **During a disaster** - remain in safe areas, conserve resources, work together
- **After a disaster** - be self-reliant, communicate, learn from experience

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