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A flood is a very large number or amount of water that rises and spreads. A stream, river, or lake floods when water overflows beyond its banks. Flooding waters cover land that is usually dry. Floods have been a part of life at all ends of the earth, they occur in forests, mountains, and even deserts. They can even happen any time of the year, not just in winter. This essay will investigate the causes and effects of floods, most notably in the areas of; kinds of floods, causes and effects of these floods, and prevention of floods.

There are a few types of flood. A flood that rises and falls rapidly with little or no advance warning is called a flash flood. They are usually the result from intense rainfall over a relatively small area. Streams and rivers periodically flood and the adjacent dry lands that are covered are called flood plains. The main causes of floods are heavy rains and fast-melting snow masses. Coastal areas are occasionally flooded by unusually high tides caused by severe winds over the ocean surfaces, or by tsunamis resulting from undersea earthquakes.

Coastal flooding can also be caused by intense rain squalls that accompany a hurricane. The main cause of flooding is when a lot of rain falls in a few days. The ground becomes so wet that no more rain can trickle through the earth. This rain runs into the rivers and the water level quickly becomes much higher. The river cannot cope with this extra water and the water breaks over the river banks. This is what happened in China in 1998. Countries like Bangladesh, where land is flat with high mountains, are often flooded in the spring.

Hurricanes, cyclones, and typhoons can cause floods. These are very strong winds which form over the seas and blow towards coastlines. The winds

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make the waves in the sea much higher. The waves then crash onto the beach and flood the flat land by the coast. Earthquakes also make possible flooding by shaking the earth causing tsunamis. The tsunamis are big waves that travel towards the shore and flood the flat coastal land. Unusually high tides in spring can influence floods by an estuary. High waves, caused by the high tide, rush up the river estuary.

There is too much water in the river so the surrounding land is flooded when the river banks burst. Finally dam failure can be the producer of a flood. If engineers do not open enough of the dam holes in times of heavy rainfall, the water can then spill over the top of the dam. The outcome of a flood can be catastrophic. Many things can happen as a result from a flood. Effects of a flood can be seen everywhere afterward. There can be broken roads and railway lines, wrecked houses, electricity and gas supplies can be cut off, trees fall over, and bridges can even break.

There are also a few other effects from floods; diseases, people and animals killed, crushed crops, smashed cars, and electrical items like computers and TV's can be ruined. There are ways to prevent or minimize the damage caused by floods. People can protect their property by insurance. They insurance money will pay for repair and replacement of damaged items. But this doesn't stop a flood from happening, or prevent damage to property. People can put sand bags around their houses, and by cracks in doors and conservatories.

Windows can also be boarded up to stop water from coming into the house. People can evacuate their houses, if there is time. As a result of evacuation they may save precious belongings, pets, 2 and essential items such as

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clothes, food, and money. Governments can spend money to make river banks higher. Soil or concrete can be used to make the river banks higher, this is called a levee. When there is more water in the river, it should therefore stay in the channel as the banks are higher. When a flood agent occurs a flood wall can be built by the river bank to protect the town from floods.

If the river bursts its banks, the water should stay in front of the floods wall. They water will not reach the town as it is trapped between the river bank and the flood wall. These are just some of the ways a flood or its effect can help to be prevented. 6. There are many ill effects of flooding, although the causes of them are many times beyond control. People can still help to prevent floods and flooding. By having insurance, building flood walls and levees, and proper evacuation it is possible to minimize the consequences resulting from these natural disasters.