# Auto Sales Primer: Avoid Getting Swept Away by a Flood of Flooded Cars by Nicole Vickers

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The devastating effects of global climate change are quite palpable, with hurricanes becoming increasingly stronger with each season. In 2011, the United States was in for a ride as the Atlantic hurricane season ushered in no less than 19 storm systems, of which 7 were hurricanes.

According to Carfax, a vehicle history report provider, the 2005 hurricane trio of Katrina, Rita, and Wilma damaged more than half-a-million cars in their wake. What's even worse is that some flood-damaged cars made their way into the market after a little bit of detailing and restoration work. Spotting flood damage in a vehicle is easier said than done but highly necessary. The next thing you know, you may be buying a car that was damaged in a recent flood. Here are some tips to help you identify a flooded car.

Smell. To see is to believe, so they say, but sometimes you have to rely on your other senses, too. Get inside a car, shut the doors and windows, and take a good whiff of the pervading smell inside. If the car smells rather funny, chances are, you may be looking at a flooded car. Also, beware of strong air freshener scents inside a car that could cover up any bad odors due to flood damage.

Spot the rust. Rust is an immediate sign that a car may have suffered water or moisture damage. Rusty car parts are dangerous as rust can quickly creep to unaffected parts too and compromise vehicle performance and safety. When visiting auto dealerships in Indianapolis, keep your eyes sharp and look for the slightest signs of rust.

Start the engine: The engine is usually the hardest hit car part during floods. Schedule a test drive when choosing cars for sale in Indianapolis and listen for any suspicious sounds coming from the engine. The purpose of the test drive is simple: to know whether the car is still roadworthy or not. Test drives also include testing electronics like the stereo and other gadgets.

Get a report. When car owners bring their cars to a mechanic for repairs, the time and nature of the repair is usually recorded. It is common practice among auto sales Indianapolis professionals to come up with a complete vehicle history report upon acquisition of a unit to inform buyers how much the car has gone through. You can get these reports free of charge. Always keep in mind that you have every right to know the exact condition of your prospective purchase, so choose wisely.

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