



Health Department

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

FLOOD CLEANUP RECOMMENDATIONS PROTECT YOUR HEALTH!

I. Mold

- People with respiratory conditions and suppressed immunity may be more at risk for mold infections.
- Signs and Symptoms of a Mold Exposure: stuffy nose, irritated eyes, wheezing, and skin irritation. If you experience health problems after exposure to mold, contact your health care provider.
- You can recognize mold by sight (discolored walls, stains) and smell (musty, earthy, foul stench).
- Preventing Mold: Drain the area, remove damaged material, clean with 10% bleach solution, disinfect and ventilate. Use a dehumidifier to remove moisture.
- Personal Protective Equipment: wear gloves, a mask, proper foot protection.

II. FOOD AND WATER SAFETY

- Discard food, cosmetics, and medicines that were not in an airtight container. Disinfect the refrigerator/freezer inside and out with a bleach solution.
- Discard completely submerged glass jars. If merely splashed, clean with a bleach solution.
- Frozen food: discard if thawed to above 41 degrees Fahrenheit or contaminated. Fruits/vegetables: wash and cook thoroughly before eating. Discard loose skinned fruits/vegetables such as lettuce if exposed to flood waters.
- Refrigerated foods: discard all milk, fish, meat, poultry and eggs if they have been exposed to temperatures above 41 degrees Fahrenheit.

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

III. VACCINATIONS

- The need for tetanus vaccination after exposure to flood waters depends on the presence of a wound, the condition of the wound, and the likelihood that the person is susceptible to tetanus. The Health Department does not vaccinate as preventive measure due to a flood emergency.
- People who sustain clean minor wounds should receive tetanus-containing vaccine if they have not completed a primary tetanus series or it has been more than 10 years after their last tetanus booster. All persons should receive a tetanus booster every 10 years.

IV. ISSUES RELATED TO CONTAMINATED WELLS AND DRINKING WATER

- Wells that are capped at less than 12 inches above grade are especially vulnerable to rising flood waters. If the surface water is risen above the height of your well cap, you should have your water tested. The well cap and casing must be completely water tight to prevent infiltration.
- Don't rely on taste, odor, or appearance to decide if the water supply is free from bacteria. A lab test is necessary to confirm the presence/absence of bacteria.
- The Health Department has free water testing kits and during a flood emergency can analyze the sample free of charge (via the state). Follow the instructions on the kit **VERY CAREFULLY**.
- While waiting for test results, obtain an alternate source of verified clean water. You can also boil water no less than 5 minutes and use it.
- Do not use your water for ice unless disinfected.
- Once the flood has resided, have your well properly chlorinated and collect a water sample at that time. Do not test your water too early in the clean-up process.

IV. USE OF A GENERATOR TO HELP IN RECOVERY

Carbon monoxide is a bi-product of generators. Do not use indoors or near open windows when using outside. Carbon monoxide is a odorless and colorless gas. Symptoms of exposure include: headache, fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath, nausea and mental confusion. Use of a carbon monoxide detector in your home is advisable.