

Drinking Water Affected By Flooding

After a flood, groundwater sources of drinking water can become contaminated and your drinking water may not be safe to drink or use for cooking and cleaning.

If you have a municipal water supply:

- Listen to and follow public announcements. Local authorities will tell you if your municipal tap water is safe to use and what steps to take if not.

If you have a well or cistern water supply:

- If your well or cistern has been flooded it may be contaminated. Until this water is tested to confirm it is safe to drink use an alternate safe drinking water supply such as bottled water for cooking or preparing food, making baby formula, washing dishes, cleaning, brushing your teeth, washing your hands, making ice, and bathing.
- Boiling water will not remove chemical contaminants. If you suspect or are informed that your water is contaminated with chemicals, use another known safe source of water, such as bottled water and consult with a water treatment specialist.
- Once the flood water has receded, your well and/or cistern will need to be disinfected. Refer to links below.
- For further information contact your local health unit:
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/contact/phu/phuloc_mn.html

Sources

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Fact Sheet: Keep Food and Water Safe After a Disaster or Power Outage
<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/pdf/foodwater.pdf>
- Health Canada – What's in Your Well? – A Guide to Well Water Treatment and Maintenance
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/pubs/water-eau/well-puits-eng.php>
- Disinfection Instruction Sheet
<http://www.rcdhu.com/HealthInformation/water-well-disinfection-instructions.pdf>
- Public Safety Canada – Floods – What to Do
<http://www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/flds-wtd/index-eng.aspx>

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For more information contact:

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