

## OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

### MUNICIPAL CLEAN UP AFTER A FLOOD

#### DRINKING WATER:

##### Private Supply:

- If your well is currently under water, **do not use** your well water.
- If your well water has a persistent odour or discolouration even after letting the water run, and/or you think that your well may be affected by chemicals such as furnace oil, gasoline or agricultural chemicals, **do not use** your well water for any purpose whatsoever – even if it has been boiled.
  - If this is the case, you should contact the nearest Regional office of the Department of Environment and Local Government at (506) 453-2690 for further information or visit their [website](#).
  - When flood waters have receded away from your well, and chemical contamination is not suspected, all water destined for drinking, making juices and ice cubes, washing fruits and vegetables, cooking, or dental hygiene should be held at a rolling boil for one (1) minute. For infant formula, continue to boil the water for two (2) minutes as per the manufacturer's instructions or use single serve ready-to-feed formula. Water can be boiled ahead of time, cooled and then stored in clean covered containers.
  - Water should be boiled until the well is chlorinated and test results show the water is free from harmful bacteria.
- For information on how and when to test your water, consult the Department of Environment and Local Government's guide entitled: [Well Chlorination and Water Testing for Those Affected by Flooding](#).

##### Municipal Supply:

- Municipal water system- advise residents whether safe to consume or not.

##### Basic Hygiene For Clean Up:

- Wash hands with soap and water immediately after being in contact with flood waters or after handling items contaminated by flood waters.
- Avoid touching face, mouth, eyes, nose, or open sores and after being in contact with flood waters or after handling items contaminated by flood waters.
- Wash your hands with soap and water before eating, drinking or smoking.
- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after using the toilet.
- Do not smoke or chew tobacco or gum while in contact with flood waters or items contaminated by flood waters.
- Keep open sores, cuts, and wounds covered with clean, dry bandages. If you have any open cuts or sores that are exposed to floodwater, keep them as clean as possible by washing them with soap and clean water and applying an antibiotic ointment to discourage infection.
- Gently flush eyes with safe water if flood waters contacts eyes.
- Use waterproof gloves (longer the better) to prevent cuts and contact with flood waters.
- Remove rubber boots and work clothes before leaving worksite.
- Rinse and wash your waders, boots, and gloves used during clean-up, wear gloves for cleaning.

## Personal Protection:

### When involved in clean-up:

- Use a protective face mask to protect nose and mouth from splashes from flood water.
- Goggles can be used to protect eyes from flood water contamination.
- Avoid touching face, mouth, eyes, nose, or open sores- especially after being in contact with flood waters or after handling items contaminated by flood waters.
- Use waterproof gloves (longer the better) to prevent cuts and contact with flood waters. Double gloving with a waterproof glove under a heavy work glove is the best way to protect the hands from both cuts and scrapes and floodwater exposure. It is important to minimize contaminating the inside of the gloves. Gloves not disposed of should be cleaned with soap and water and dried between uses.
- Wear water-repellant/waterproof coveralls/rainsuit to keep floodwaters off clothing.
- Wear watertight boots with a steel toe and insole (not just steel shank) to protect feet from injury.
- Remove rubber boots and work clothes before leaving the clean-up site.
- Rinse and wash your waders, boots, and gloves used during clean-up, wear gloves for cleaning. Air dry all clothing and equipment.

## Protecting Children:

- Don't allow children to play in floodwater areas until they have been cleaned up or for about a week after the floodwater has cleared completely (after which sunlight and soil help destroy harmful bacteria and any excess risk to health should disappear).
- Clean up of public areas: Public areas can generally be cleaned in the same manner as homes. However, situations should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine if additional measures are appropriate. For example, apart from cleaning hard surfaces on play equipment at a public playground, the sand in sand boxes and mulch or other ground material on playgrounds may need to be removed if flood sediment impacted these areas. Officials may decide to close playgrounds until clean-up is completed. Remind people to use proper personal hygiene (such as washing hands) when public areas are open by placing signs and providing washing facilities.

## Waste Collection:

- Advise residents on the status of household waste collection and details on special pick-ups being arranged for other flood damaged materials and types of materials accepted.
  - Example: Regular household waste will be collected as usual and should be placed separately from flood-related items. Special pickups are being arranged for local service districts, and residents will be advised of the details in the coming days. For those living in municipalities, information regarding flood debris collection will be communicated directly through their municipalities. Waste being accepted during these pickups includes: appliances (remove doors and covers for safety), furniture, carpeting, insulation, paper products, etc. Small loose items should be bagged or boxed. Furniture may be included with bagged garbage. Construction and demolition materials (wood, concrete blocks, etc.) should be placed in a separate pile. Large appliances should also be in a separate pile. People wishing to independently dispose of non-hazardous items may take them to the following locations at no charge: Crane Mountain landfill, Fredericton Region Solid Waste and the Regional Service Commission 8 transfer station. Regular household hazardous waste generated by the flood can also be taken at these facilities. People should check each facility's hours of operation, the schedule for Household Hazardous Waste Days and inform staff at the gate that they are disposing of flood-damaged items.

## Burning Debris:

- Advise residents on burning of debris: People should not burn their debris, as this can cause negative health and environmental impacts. Burning materials contaminated by unknown chemicals may release particulates, gases and vapours that can cause respiratory illness.