

Public Health Madison & Dane County: Properly cleaning up after floods

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Flood waters pose health threats

Recent heavy rains have created flood conditions in number of areas of Dane County. Flood waters can carry with them many contaminants that can pose health risks, such as sewage, fertilizer, manure, gas, and pesticides. It is important to stay out of flood waters if possible and clean up properly.

Flooded homes and businesses can lead to the growth of mold, which can cause health concerns. It is important to stay safe and healthy while cleaning up after a flood. See the Wisconsin Department of Health Services for information on mold and how to clean up mold .

Take precautions around using household water for drinking or food preparation. For private well owners, if the wellhead has been submerged for any length of time, the contaminated flood waters may have polluted the drinking water. Do not drink or bathe in water from a well that has been or is flooded until the well can be disinfected. Guidelines for disinfecting private wells can be found from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Testing for bacterial contamination should be done after a well is disinfected and the chlorine has been flushed from the system. The Public Health Madison & Dane County (PHMDC) Lab performs water testing. Call (608) 243-0357 for a consultation

on what is needed.

If you are a facility licensed by PHMDC (Restaurant, Grocery Store, Swimming Pool, Hotel, etc.), and are impacted by flooding, please call (608) 242-6515 if you have questions about proper clean-up or would like to speak to a Public Health Sanitarian.