



# DELAWARE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICE

99 MAIN STREET, DELHI, NEW YORK 13753

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For Immediate Release:

## **Flood Safety Information**

### DELHI OFFICE

#### FIRST FLOOR

- ◆ Early Intervention
- ◆ C.S.H.C.N.
- ◆ P.H.C.P.
- ◆ Preschool Program
- ◆ Family Health
- ◆ Disease Control
- ◆ Immunization
- ◆ Lead Program
- ◆ Rabies Program

PHONE: 607-832-5200

FAX: 607-832-5201

#### SECOND FLOOR

- ◆ Home Care Division
- ◆ Long Term Home Health Care Program

PHONE: 607-832-5200

FAX: 607-832-5202

### **Well Contamination**

If the area around your well was flooded or if you suspect that your well is contaminated, you need to disinfect the water in the well before using it. You should continue disinfection at the tap until the water is tested and found suitable for drinking. Contact the New York State Department of Health at 607-432-3911 for a well testing kit.

Contaminated water can contain microorganisms that cause diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, headaches, or other symptoms...so make sure you disinfect all water before drinking it or using it to prepare food by:

1. Bringing water to a rolling boil for two minutes
2. Then let the water cool before drinking

(Boiled water will taste better if you put oxygen back into it by pouring it back and forth between two containers, this will also improve the taste of stored water)

\*It is safe to shower/shave with unboiled water as long as the water is not swallowed\*

### **What to Do With Food after a Power Outrage**

Generally food in the refrigerator will remain cold for four to six hours if the door isn't open, food in the freezer will stay frozen for about one day.

\*However, some foods normally kept in the refrigerator are okay to keep even if they have been at a room temperature for a few days.

For example: Butter/Margarine, Hard Cheese, and Fresh Fruit/Veggies

But just remember...When in Doubt Throw It Out!!

### **What to do with Food, Food Containers, and Utensils after possible flood water contamination**

- Raw foods **MUST** be discarded
- Food containers must be discarded or properly cleaned (Discard food containers with lids that are screwed on or pressed on, such as soda bottles, they **CANNOT** be cleaned adequately)
- Ice should be made with boiled or bottled water
- Canned foods can be used unless the cans are swollen, rusted, seriously dented, or the contents cannot be identified. Wash off food cans that are still sealed and disinfect them for five minutes in a bleach solution of **two teaspoons of bleach per gallon of water.**

- Discard jars of food with easily removable tops (such as spaghetti sauce or pickles)
- Clean and disinfect dishes, utensils, and cookware in the solution, but **DO NOT** use this method on sterling silver tableware, instead sanitize sterling silver by putting it in boiling water for at least two minutes

### **Indoor Air after a Flood**

Flooding may cause indoor air quality problems that could last for a long time and cause you and your family to get sick. Bacteria and mold brought into the home during flooding may present a health hazard. **Dry out your home as quickly as possible.** Discard items that have been soaked with flood waters. Dehumidifiers, fans, and open windows all help to dry out your home. Avoid using too much heat because it will encourage bacteria and mold growth more quickly. Be patient as the drying out process could take several weeks.

### **To protect against health risks associated with mold**

- Remove standing water and wet materials
- If mold growth has already occurred, carefully remove the moldy material with the bleach mixture (2 teaspoons of bleach per gallon of water)
- Consider using personal protective equipment when cleaning or removing mold-gloves, goggles and a mask if possible
- Individuals with mold allergies/asthma should not clean or remove moldy materials
- Open windows and doors to provide plenty of fresh air

\*Remember not to mix cleaners and disinfectants, particularly those containing chlorine or ammonia. They may produce chemical reactions and gasses that can be hazardous or even fatal. Read and follow label instructions carefully.

### **Most Important Tips to Remember:**

1. Boil Water
2. Clean/Disinfect or discard anything that flood water may have come into contact with
3. Dry out your homes (open windows, use dehumidifiers & fans)

This information has been reformatted from the New York State Department of Health 'Don't be Left in the Dark'

Flood safety, safe mold removal information and flood clean-up kits available at Sidney Center Fire Hall. For more flood safety information contact Delaware County Public Health at 607-832-5200 or New York State Department of Health Oneonta District Office at 607-432-3911.