

# Drinking water safety after a flood

## News Release

For Immediate Release

September 11, 2013

Flooding has the potential to contaminate drinking water with harmful germs that can make us sick. Due to the recent flooding, Algoma Public Health recommends the following:

- If you get water from a well and had flooding on your property, the water may be contaminated. We recommend not drinking the water unless it has been boiled (1 minute rolling boil) or use an alternate water supply (bottled water) for cooking, preparing food, making baby formula, washing dishes, brushing teeth and making ice. You should test your water for bacteria. You can get sampling bottles at the Sault Ste. Marie lab located on 160 McDougall Street. Learn more about how to use [safe water during a boil water advisory](#).
- If your water has been tested and it is not safe for drinking, we recommend disinfecting the well and not drinking the water until 2 consecutive clear samples 24 hours apart have been obtained. Learn more about how to [disinfect your well properly](#).
- Do not try to pump septic tanks at this time, as an empty tank can become buoyant and potentially leak or spill.
- Be aware of the potential of sewage backups in flooding situations.

For more information on floods, visit our [website](#) or join the conversation on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

## Additional Information:

[Boil water](#)

[How to chlorinate your well](#)

[How to take a water sample](#)

[Flooded wells and septic systems](#)

# Take action after a flood

## News Release

For Immediate Release

September 10th, 2013

Due to the heavy rain fall on September 10th, 2013, many homes within the Algoma District may be experiencing flooding.

Water damage in the home can cause quick mold growth and can also carry many germs that can make us sick.

Algoma Public Health recommends the following measures for those dealing with a flood at this time:

- Do not venture into a flooded basement until the electrical utility has shut off the power to your house.
- Remove standing water as soon as possible (e.g. wet shop vacuum).
- Keep areas as dry as possible (e.g. use of dehumidifiers, fans).
- Clean and disinfect contaminated areas with non-ammonium based soap and house hold bleach (do not mix chemicals).
- Dispose of any food contaminated by flood waters.
- Discard of any materials contaminated by flood waters that cannot be reasonably cleaned and disinfected.
- If you are on a private well make sure to have your water tested. You can pick up a water sampling bottle at Algoma Public Health offices or the Public Health Lab at 160 McDougall Street. All water samples can be returned to the Public Health Lab for bacterial testing.
- Do not try to pump septic tanks during flood or heavy rainfall due to risk of breakage and spillage.

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