



# STATE OF OHIO

## Emergency Operations Center

**NEWS RELEASE**  
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## State Health Officials Warn Residents of Flood Water Risks

Columbus, OH--- State Health officials advise residents to use caution when coming into contact with flood waters because they may contain potentially dangerous materials, such as fecal matter from overflowing sewage systems, agricultural runoff and chemicals from industrial areas. Wading in flood waters can also be a cause of infection or result in a variety of injuries. Eating or drinking anything contaminated by flood water can cause diarrheal disease.

Follow these tips to stay healthy during and after the flood:

### Flooding in Your Area:

- Tune into local radio and TV stations to see if your area is under a boil alert for drinking water.
- Follow the guidelines if you have a [private water systems](#) or [sewage treatment systems](#).
- Do not allow children to play in flood water areas.
- Practice good hygiene (Wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer if soap is not available) after contact with flood waters. Wash children's hands frequently (always before meals).

### Cleaning Your Home After a Flood:

- Wear rubber boots, rubber gloves, and goggles during cleanup of affected area.
- Keep children and pets out of the affected area until cleanup has been completed.
- Do not allow children to play with toys that have been contaminated by flood water and have not been disinfected.
- Remove and discard items that cannot be washed and disinfected (such as, mattresses, carpeting, carpet padding, rugs, upholstered furniture, cosmetics, stuffed animals, baby toys, pillows, foam-rubber items, books, wall coverings, and most paper products).
- Remove and discard drywall and insulation that has been contaminated with sewage or flood waters.
- Thoroughly clean all hard surfaces (such as flooring, concrete, molding, wood and metal furniture, countertops, appliances, sinks, and other plumbing fixtures) with hot water and laundry or dish detergent.
- Help the drying process by using fans, air conditioning units, and dehumidifiers.
- After completing the cleanup, wash your hands with soap and warm water. Use water that has been boiled for 1 minute (allow the water to cool before washing your hands).
  - Or you may use water that has been disinfected for personal hygiene use (solution of 1/8 teaspoon [~0.75 milliliters] of household bleach per 1 gallon of water). Let it stand for 30 minutes. If the water is cloudy, use solution of 1/4 teaspoon (~1.5 milliliters) of household bleach per 1 gallon of water.

- Wash all clothes worn during the cleanup in hot water and detergent. These clothes should be washed separately from uncontaminated clothes and linens.
- Seek immediate medical attention if you become injured or ill.

Additional Resources:

Risks of Flood Waters <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/flood/standing.html>

Cleanup of Flood Water <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/cleanupwater.asp>

Disinfecting and Sanitizing

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/cleaning/index.html#bleach>

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