

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

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Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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Contact: Office of Communications
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**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ADVISES NORTH FLORIDA RESIDENTS
OF FLOOD PRECAUTIONS**

~DOH alerts communities to potential flooding risk~

TALLAHASSEE - With potential flooding on the radar for many across northern areas of the state, including the Alapaha, Aucilla, Suwannee and Withlacoochee Rivers, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) encourages residents located in these areas to be prepared for any future flooding that may occur. It is important to stay alert for flood warnings from local officials, including the Suwannee River Water Management District.

During flooding, the greatest threat comes from moving water. The deeper the moving water, the greater the threat. People should avoid driving in moving water, regardless of the size of the vehicle.

Flood waters can rise and pool on streets and throughout neighborhoods. In these situations, be aware of the following:

- Road surfaces become disguised and drivers can unknowingly steer into a deep body of water, such as a canal or pond.
- Electricity from streetlights and power poles may be present in standing water, causing a deadly shock to anyone coming in contact with it.
- Children playing in potentially contaminated standing water can become sick or be bitten by snakes or floating insects.

People coming into contact with floodwaters should thoroughly wash and rinse any exposed body parts with soap and disinfected water. Residents in flood-affected areas should take precautions to avoid consuming potentially contaminated water. A flooded well may contain disease-causing bacteria and may not be safe to drink.

To disinfect water, DOH recommends one of the following:

- Boil water before use, holding it at a rolling boil for at least one minute before using it for drinking, brushing teeth, washing food, cooking, or washing dishes.
- Disinfect water by adding 8 drops (about 1/8 tsp.) of plain, unscented household bleach (4 to 6 percent active ingredient) per gallon of water, and then let it stand for 30 minutes. If the water is cloudy after 30 minutes, repeat the procedure once. Use a container that has a cap or cover for disinfecting and storing water to be used for drinking. This will prevent contamination.
- Use bottled water, especially for mixing baby formula.

After the flooding subsides:

- Wells can be disinfected using the procedures provided by county or state health departments: <http://www.myfloridaeh.com/water/privatewells.html>. Or visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's website for instructions: <http://water.epa.gov/drink/info/well/whatdo.cfm>
- If available, have water tested through the county health department or by a laboratory certified by the state to perform a drinking water analysis for coliform bacteria. (Please note to inquire about information related to potential costs for water testing.)

Florida Department of Health

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- After disinfecting a well, the water should be tested to verify that it is safe to drink. Although unscented household bleach is effective against microorganisms, it will not remove chemical contamination.

For more information, please contact the county health department or visit www.doh.state.fl.us.

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