

PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY FROM FLOODS

Stay healthy in a flood with these simple steps!

THE FLOOD AND HEALTH CONNECTION

Wisconsin is more likely to have a flood in the spring and during heavy summer rains.

Flooding affects agriculture, transportation, property, water quality, and puts your safety at risk.

Take these important steps to protect your health and that of your family in a flood.

BEFORE A FLOOD

- **Make a disaster emergency kit.** Important things to include in your kit: three-day supply of food and water, cell phone and charger, flashlight and batteries, can opener, first aid kit, extra cash, and a change of clothes.
- **Keep emergency numbers nearby.** Make a list of emergency numbers and keep it near a phone. Your list might include: 911, poison control center, police nonemergency line, hospital, and personal emergency contact list.
- **Move electronics off the floor.** If there is an active flood warning, you can protect your property by moving electric appliances off the floor and making sure your sump pump is working and has a battery-operated backup.
- **Consider adding flood insurance.** Standard insurance policies generally don't cover flooding. Flood insurance is available for homeowners, renters, and business owners through the National Flood Insurance Program.

AFTER A FLOOD

Check your water supply.



Pro tip: If you have **municipal water**, run your faucet for at least five minutes before using it. If you have **well water**, disinfect your well, and test your water after a week. Don't drink the water until you know it is free from harmful bacteria.

Avoid flood water.



Pro tip: Flood water is dangerous. It can contain hazardous chemicals and strong currents can wash you or your car away.

Tune into broadcasts.



Pro tip: Tune into your local news media for information on evacuation procedures.

MORE TIPS TO FOLLOW DURING AND AFTER A FLOOD:

- **Do not drive through flood waters.** It takes just 12 inches of rushing water to carry away a car. When you encounter flood water, turn around, don't drown.
- **Stay out of flood waters.** Flood water can contain bacteria, sewage, sharp objects, and other dangerous items.
- **Drain basements slowly.** Basements containing standing water should be emptied gradually—no more than 2–3 inches per day. If a basement is drained too quickly, the water pressure outside the walls will be greater than the water pressure inside, which may cause the basement floor and walls to crack and collapse.
- **Shut off electrical power if you suspect damage to your home.** Even if you're uncertain, shut off electrical power, natural gas and propane tanks to avoid fire, electrocution, or explosions.
- **Use battery-powered lanterns to light homes rather than candles.** Candles could trigger an explosion if there is a gas leak.



When you encounter flood water, turn around, don't drown.

For more tips, view the full toolkit at:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/climate

WISCONSIN CLIMATE AND HEALTH PROGRAM
Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Health

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/climate | JANUARY 2018 (rev. 06/2019) | dhsclimate@wi.gov

Department of Health Services | Division of Public Health | P-02077

