



Flood Recovery: Water

Floods and Drinking Water

If you aren't sure your home water supply has been contaminated by flood water, purify all water before personal use. Boil water ten minutes or chlorinate by adding one teaspoon chlorine bleach per gallon of water. However, check the label to be sure that hypochlorite is the only active ingredient in the bleach. Do not use any bleach that contains soap.

Household iodine from the medicine chest or first aid kit will purify water. The iodine should be two percent United States Pharmacopeia (U.S.P.) strength. Add 20 drops per gallon of clear water, and 40 drops per gallon of cloudy water. Before attempting any of these chemical treatments, call your county Extension office.

Source: Genta Speakman, former Extension home environment specialist

Restoring Wells After Floods

Water pumped from wells that have been submerged by floodwater should be disinfected before being used for drinking, food preparation and other domestic needs.

Wells located in lowland areas along streams or drainage ways can be contaminated with silt, bacteria or anything else in the water if floodwater enters through the top of the well.

If a well is flooded, check for silt accumulation inside the well. If the water is cloudy, the system should be flushed until the water clears. Then the interior of the well and the pumping equipment should be disinfected with a strong chlorine solution, a procedure known as "shock chlorination."

If the well has been submerged by floodwater but no silt is present, you must still shock chlorinate the system.

Source: Jim Hairston, Extension water quality specialist