



Serving Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet & Otsego Counties

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For Immediate Release

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Protecting Your Well After Flooding

HDNW Urges Residents to Inspect Their Wells and Drinking Water Amid Flood Conditions

With recent flooding occurring across our four-county district, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan (HDNW) is informing residents that emergencies such as floods and power outages can make well water unsafe to drink.

“After flooding, it’s important to act quickly,” says Jeremy Fruk, Environmental Health Director at HDNW. “Do not use well water until you know it is safe. Watch for changes in color, smell, or taste.”

If flooding occurs around your well, your drinking water may become contaminated. Dirty water can enter through the well cap or vent. This can increase the risk of illness. Flood water may carry bacteria, viruses, sewage, organic debris, pesticides, and other chemicals.

If you use city water your risk of contamination is very low.

If you suspect your water is unsafe, you should obtain water from a known, safe source for drinking, cooking, and preparing food.

What to do Immediately:

- Do NOT drink the water,
- Use bottled water or water from a safe source,
- Boil water for at least five minutes, if necessary.

Well Care After Flooding:

- Remove debris from around the well,
- Flush the system using a hose for at least two hours after water clears,
- Once clear, flush all home plumbing,
- Do not turn on your system until after a professional has inspected it,
 - Flood water can damage wiring and pumps, increasing the risk of electric shock.

Disinfect the Well:

- Have a professional disinfect drilled, driven, or bored wells,
- Do NOT use or disinfect flooded dug wells.

If you have questions about your private water supply, please call HDNW at 800-432-4121. For more information on private well safety, click [here](#) to access the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Fact Sheet.

To help keep your water supply safe year-round, test your water annually and monitor any changes in taste, smell or clarity. To stay informed on local health updates, consider subscribing to our monthly newsletter by clicking [here](#).

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