

Tips for Dealing with Flooding on your Property

Recent heavy rains across the province have swollen lakes and rivers across several watersheds and resulted in water ponding on many properties. Some properties have been affected by flooding.

Flood water and water ponding around wells and septic systems can affect the safety of your drinking water and how your septic system works. The Leeds Grenville and Lanark Health Unit is advising those whose wells are directly affected by these conditions to boil their water for one minute at a rolling boil before drinking the water. Have your well water tested for bacteria.

If your **septic system** has been affected, limit water usage by taking quick showers rather than baths, avoid using the dishwasher, garbage disposal and washing machine and flush your toilets only when necessary. Ensure your basement sump pump is not going into the septic system.

Do not pump out your septic tank when the soil around the tank or the leaching bed is still saturated with water. High ground water levels may cause an empty septic tank to float and break out of the ground, and damage the tank and connecting plumbing.

The following tips will help protect your family during flooding events:

- Keep your family safe by keeping family members and pets away from and out of the flood water.
- **DO NOT enter areas where electrical systems have been affected by flood water as you may be electrocuted. Always wait for clearance from the electrical authority before entering these areas.**
- Building materials, clothing and furniture exposed to flood waters are likely contaminated with sewage and can support the growth of mold. Some items can be cleaned and disinfected; others may need to be thrown out.
- Ask for professional advice during clean up. If you try to save and clean items on your own, wear protective clothing, a mask and gloves.

For more information on flooding please visit the health unit website at www.healthunit.org or call the Health ACTION Line at 1-800-660-5853.

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