

Protecting Private Drinking Water Wells During Flood Conditions

What You Need to Know



Private drinking water wells contaminated with floodwater can pose a health risk. Well owners are recommended to take corrective actions if your well was flooded.

What do I do if I think my well is flooded?

You may still want to have your water tested as a precaution if:

- Floodwater came within 50 feet of your well, but did not reach the well
- Well equipment (well pumps, pressure tanks) is located in your basement.

You do not need to disinfect your well before having it tested.

Assume your well is contaminated if floodwater reached your well or covered the top of your well casing. Water from your well should not be used for drinking, cooking, bathing, or brushing your teeth until the floodwater recedes and the following steps have been completed:

- A licensed well contractor inspects the well, and, if necessary, cleans out any sediment or debris that may have entered your well. Using your well pump to do this could ruin the pump.
- A licensed well contractor disinfects your well.
- A water sample is submitted to the SCHED laboratory or other certified laboratory to test for the presence of coliform bacteria after disinfecting the well and pumping out the chlorine solution.

It may be necessary to repeat the disinfection and testing process several times to ensure that your well is free of bacterial contamination. Don't use the water from your well for drinking, cooking, bathing, or brushing your teeth until the lab has informed you that it is safe, and free of bacterial contamination.

For more information about well safety and protecting your health during a flood, contact Saginaw County Health Department Environmental Health Services at 989-758-3686.

