



# HAMILTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT.

When the chance for flooding occurs, there are steps we can take to protect our property and most importantly prevent ourselves from becoming injured or sick.

## **Power**

- Turn off main power switches.
- Air out and wipe dry all appliance and electrical outlets exposed to water before you use them again.
- If you have fuel oil or gas systems, be sure tanks are secure and all lines are free from breaks.

## **Basement**

- Pump out standing water and remove all debris.
- Wait to pump until flood waters have receded below basement level.
- Allow debris to drain before disposal.
- Strain away all liquids from trash.
- After straining trash, wrap in newspaper and store in tight-lid garbage cans until pick up.

## **General**

- Open all windows for drying and ventilation.
- Use electric fans.
- Keep flood waters away from mouth, nose, eyes and skin.
- Do not allow children to play in or near flood water.
- Do not drive your vehicle into a flooded area.

## **Food and Water Safety**

- A good rule to remember during flooding situations or when your power has been off for an extended period of time is “When in doubt, throw it out.”
- Discard all foods exposed to flood waters.
- If refrigerators/freezers have taken in flood waters, discard food stored there.
- If no flood water entered these appliances, but power was lost long enough for foods to thaw, discard all partially thawed foods.
- Discard milk, cheeses and other foods prone to spoilage.
- Clean undented cans with bleach solution.
- Discard all bulging or leaking canned food items.

**Clean up**

- Wash contaminated surfaces/objects with warm, soapy water and disinfect with a bleach/water solution, one cap of 5.25 percent chlorine bleach per one gallon of water.
- Wear rubber boots and gloves during cleanup.

**How do I prevent disease during floods?**

- Outbreaks of communicable diseases after floods are unusual, but flood water can carry microorganisms and other contaminants.
- Avoid skin contact with sewer water, especially cuts and sores. Keep them clean and covered.
- If you should suffer a cut while working in flood or sewer water, contact your physician or the Health District about receiving a tetanus shot.
- Do not allow children to play in areas contaminated by sewage backup.
- Do not eat or drink anything exposed to sewer water.
- Keep contaminated objects, water, and hands away from mouth, eyes and nose.
- Wash hands frequently, especially after bathroom use, before eating and immediately following contact with sewer water or contaminated objects/surfaces.

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