



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Health Department Reminds Camp Owners Impacted by Flooding to Take Precautions

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BURLINGTON – The Vermont Department of Health is advising residents in Addison, Chittenden, Franklin and Grand Isle counties affected by flooding to continue to take special precautions to prevent illness and injury, including seasonal camp owners who may be opening their property for the first time during the Memorial Day weekend.

Lake Champlain (currently at 102.7 feet) remains above flood levels, and could remain high for at least a week. A total of 350 damage reports to homes and camps have been reported to Vermont Emergency Management.

“Well water contamination, mold, electrical systems that have been exposed to water, and the potential for injuries related to slips and falls on wet flooring should all be taken into consideration,” said Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD. “Camps that have been unoccupied should be inspected closely if there has been any contact with flood water at all.”

Well water may not be safe to drink, prepare food with, clean with, or bathe in after a flood, as it may be contaminated with microorganisms, such as bacteria, sewage, agricultural or industrial waste, chemicals, and other harmful substances.

People with drinking water wells that are in flooded areas should assume that their water is contaminated. Take precautions to protect health if the well is in close proximity to flooded areas, or if there has been a change in water quality (odor or taste).

Do not drink water from the tap until the well has been disinfected and a water test confirms that the water is safe. Use bottled water, or boil water for one minute to make it safe for drinking, cooking, making juice or ice, washing fruits or vegetable and brushing teeth.

Do not return to a flooded home or camp until a qualified professional has inspected your electrical and heating system.

Mold can also grow inside a damp building or camp. Open doors and windows and use fans to dry out the building. Clean wet items and surfaces with detergent and water. Remove any mold by using a bleach solution (one cup of bleach in one gallon of water). Wear rubber gloves and keep the windows and doors open while using bleach. Throw away carpet and upholstered furniture (porous items) that cannot be dried quickly.

For more detailed information on how to avoid illness and injury during or after a flood, visit the Health Department website at: <http://www.healthvermont.gov/enviro/water/flood.aspx>

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