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Alert for All Private Well Owners in Flooded Areas



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Viera, FL -The Florida Department of Health in Brevard County (DOH-Brevard) advises residents living in homes with private wells affected by flood waters to take precautions against disease-causing organisms that may make their water unsafe to drink.

Drink only commercially-bottled, both boiled and cooled, or water disinfected by another approved method until your water supply is tested and deemed safe.

Use commercially-bottled water for mixing baby formula.

To be safe, you can disinfect tap water using the procedures below. Do not rely on unverified methods for decontaminating water. If water is cloudy, let it settle and filter it through a clean cloth, paper towel or coffee filter. This will help the disinfection process. If you have any extra water put it in containers that were properly disinfected (see information below water disinfection).

The preferred method to disinfect water is to Boil Water.

- Bring water to a rolling boil for at least one minute to kill harmful bacteria and parasites.
- To improve the flat taste of boiled water, add one pinch of salt (depending upon health conditions) to each quart or liter of water, or pour the water from one clean container to another clean container several times.

If boiling is not possible, use Household Bleach.

- Add eight drops of plain unscented household bleach (four to six percent strength), which is about 1/8 teaspoon or a dime sized puddle, per gallon of water.
 - Do not use color safe bleach or bleaches with added cleaners.
- If a higher strength bleach is used (up to 8.25 percent strength), only add six drops of bleach.
- Mix the solution and let it stand for 30 minutes.
- If the water is cloudy after 30 minutes, repeat the procedure one time.
- If the chlorine taste is too strong, pour the water from one clean container to another and let stand for a few hours before use.

It is also possible to use other Disinfection Methods.

Note: Follow the instructions on the product label as each product may have a different strength.

- Five drops of Iodine (two percent tincture) can be added to each quart or liter of water to be disinfected.

Note: Per the [CDC](#), water that has been disinfected with iodine is NOT recommended for pregnant women, people with thyroid problems, those with known hypersensitivity to iodine or for continuous use for more than a few weeks at a time.

- If the water is cloudy or colored add 10 drops of iodine.
- Stir and let the water stand for at least 30 minutes before use.
- Water disinfection tablets (available at sporting goods departments or stores) that contain chlorine, iodine, chlorine dioxide or other disinfecting agents may also be used.

Containers for water should be rinsed with a bleach solution of one tablespoon of bleach per gallon of water before reusing them.

After the flooding subsides:

- Disinfect your private well using the procedures available from DOH-Brevard or visit the Florida Department of Health website: FloridaHealth.gov/environmental-health/private-well-testing/index.html. You may also visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (US EPA) website for instructions: <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/wellsdisinfect.html>.
- To find out if your water is safe, have it tested by a certified laboratory for coliform bacteria and/or chemicals. To find a certified laboratory, visit the following website: floridadep.gov/dear/florida-dep-laboratory/content/nelap-certified-laboratory-search.

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