

Flooded Private Well Recommendations

- If flood water goes over well, water is NOT safe to drink (or brush teeth, shower or wash with)
- Flood waters usually contain fecal material and other contaminants from overflowing septic systems, agric run-off, industry by-products
- Common illnesses with exposure to flood water:
 - Skin tissue infections following cuts, scratches, abrasions, or insect bites
 - Deep tissue infections following puncture wounds or trauma
 - Diarrhea following ingestion of contaminated water



When to test a flooded well?

1. Anytime water has gone over well head

2. Water not over well but has sudden change in look (cloudy, silty), taste, or smell

- After waters recede with help of certified well driller or contractor:
 - Inspect for well defects from flood damage
 - Pump well until water clear
 - Shock chlorinate the well and distribution system
 - When no longer smell chlorine, test drinking water for Total Coliforms and *E.coli* (nitrates optional)
- *Summary: Collect sample AFTER waters have receded and well system has been chlorinated. If not, water will always test POSITIVE for Total Coliform and E. coli.*

Flood Related Resources



- IDNR “What should I do when my well floods”
- Water System Council wellcare® [“Managing a Flooded Well”](#)
- [IDPH Fact Sheets](#)
 - Cleaning flooded basement
 - Questions about mold
 - Private well used after a flood
 - Private flooded sewage systems
- [CDC “Floodwater Safety, Reentering your Home”](#)
- [State Hygienic Laboratory](#)
800-421-IOWA
 - Collection kits (if you need more Grants to Counties containers)
 - Flood Health and Safety Fact Sheets