



# COUNTY OF KENOSHA

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jim Kreuser, County Executive

1010 – 56<sup>th</sup> Street, Third Floor

Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140

(262) 653-2600

Fax: (262) 653-2817

July 14, 2017

News release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Jennie Tunkieicz

262-653-2831

## **Disaster recovery tips and assistance available for flood victims**

Kenosha – July 14, 2017 – Recent flooding throughout Kenosha County resulted in damage to public and private property, as well as displacement of residents from their homes.

Kenosha County residents affected by flooding should be aware of the health and safety hazards associated with rising water from rivers, creeks, and ravines.

“Flood waters are unsafe, and residents should take heed of the dangers before attempting to re-enter their homes or assess damages – flood waters should never be considered for recreation,” said Cynthia Johnson, Health Officer/Director, Kenosha County Division of Health. “Swift and variable river currents along with potential health and safety hazards created from floating or buried objects, damaged electrical systems, or contamination due to decreased sanitation provide an extremely dangerous environment.”

The Kenosha County Division of Health is currently contacting restaurants to determine those affected by flooding and any damages.

All Kenosha County residents, businesses, or farms that have sustained damage should report that damage to the Kenosha County Emergency Management Flood Hotline at 262-605-7924. Leave a message there in regard to the damage sustained. Damage can also be reported by email at [disaster@kenoshacounty.org](mailto:disaster@kenoshacounty.org).

Kenosha County Executive Jim Kreuser, Sheriff David Beth and the Kenosha County Division of Health make the following recommendations for people in the flood-impacted areas:

**Travel safely:**

- Stay away from rising river waters and remember that even shallow, standing water presents potential risks/hazards.
- Do not drive on flooded streets.
- Wear boots or waders if you must expose yourself to flood waters.

- Inland beaches are considered unsafe until sampling can be completed, starting the week of July 17th, 2017.

### **Clean safely:**

- If there has been a backflow of sewage into your home, wear rubber boots and waterproof gloves during clean-up and disinfect contaminated household materials.
- Consult your utility company before you attempt to use water-damaged appliances to avoid electrocution.
- Portable generator exhaust contains deadly carbon monoxide gas – only use a generator if you can vent its exhaust safely.
- Keeping your hands clean helps you avoid getting sick. Wash hands with soap and water. Make sure children follow these same precautions. Keep children and pets out of the affected area until cleanup has been completed.
- Remove and discard items that cannot be washed and disinfected (such as, mattresses, carpeting, carpet padding, rugs, upholstered furniture, cosmetics, stuffed animals, baby toys, pillows, foam-rubber items, books, wall coverings, and most paper products).
- Remove and discard drywall and insulation that has been contaminated with sewage or flood waters.
- Thoroughly clean all hard surfaces (such as flooring, concrete, molding, wood and metal furniture, countertops, appliances, sinks, and other plumbing fixtures) with hot water and laundry or dish detergent.
- Help the drying process by using fans, air conditioning units, and dehumidifiers.
- Inland beaches are considered unsafe until sampling can be completed, starting the week of July 17th, 2017.
- If you receive an open wound from a flood water contaminated object, call the health department at 262-605-6775 to determine whether a tetanus shot is necessary.

### **Eat safely:**

- Do not eat any food that has come in contact with flood water.
- If the power was out, the refrigerator will keep foods cold for about 4 hours (if door remained closed); a full freezer – 2 days. A good rule of thumb – when in doubt, throw it out.

### **Test your water:**

- Affected residents should also test well water for contamination if in a flooded area. Free water testing kits are available at the following locations: local town and village halls, the Kenosha County Job Center, and the Kenosha County Center.

### **Emergency Housing/Disaster Relief assistance:**

- Contact the American Red Cross at 800-236-8680.
- The Shalom Center is offering emergency shelter assistance through the INNS Program, 262-658-1713, ext. 131, available 24-hours a day.

- Food Assistance is available through the Shalom Center, which will provide a 3-day emergency food box with perishables and non-perishables, 262-925-8755 ext. 2, available on Monday. Identification and proof of flood impact required.
- Food and other emergency assistance is available for Western Kenosha County residents at the Sharing Center, 25700 Wilmot Road, Trevor, 262-298-5535.
- To apply for Wisconsin Kenosha Racine Partnership (FoodShare), call 888-794-5820.
- For utility and energy assistance, and other emergency assistance from Kenosha County Human Services, visit the Kenosha County Center at highways 45 and 50 in Bristol, or the Kenosha County Job Center, 8600 Sheridan Road, Kenosha.

For more information about health concerns, please call the Kenosha County Division of Health at 262-605-6700, 800-472-8008.

For safety concerns, please call 911 in an emergency, for questions in a non-emergency call the Kenosha County Sheriff's Department, 262-605-5100.

###