



COUNTY OF KENOSHA

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Kenosha County Division of Health urges people to remain safe during flooding events

With a Flood Warning in place along the Fox River and Flood Safety Awareness Week coming up the week of March 18-22, the Kenosha County Division of Health is urging people to take precautions to stay safe when flooding events occur.

“Springtime flooding is already happening on the Fox River, and it’s likely to pop up elsewhere, too, as all of that snow that we saw over the winter melts rapidly,” said Cynthia Johnson, Kenosha County Division of Health Director and Health Officer. “It’s important for people to emphasize personal and family safety, and to prepare before flooding begins.”

Follow these tips to prepare before a flood:

- Stock an emergency supply kit: Kits should include a three-day supply of food and water, a cellphone and charger, a flashlight and batteries, a can opener, first aid kit, extra cash, and a change of clothes.
- Move electronics off the floor: If there is an active flood warning, move electric appliances off the floor and make sure your sump pump is working and has a battery-operated backup.
- Consider adding flood insurance: Standard insurance policies generally don’t cover flooding. Flood insurance is available for homeowners, renters, and business owners through the National Flood Insurance Program.

Follow these tips during and after a flood:

- Do not drive through floodwaters: It takes just 12 inches of rushing water to carry away a car. When you encounter flood water, turn around, don’t drown.
- Stay out of floodwaters: Floodwater can contain bacteria, sewage, sharp objects, and other dangerous items.

- Make sure tetanus vaccinations for you and your family are up to date: A same-day tetanus vaccination should be administered to those who acquire a puncture wound in floodwater or have open wounds exposed to floodwaters in the home or outdoors.
- Drain basements slowly: Basements containing standing water should be emptied gradually – no more than 2-3 inches per day. If a basement is drained too quickly, the water pressure outside the walls will be greater than the water pressure inside, which may cause the basement floor and walls to crack and collapse.
- Shut off electrical power if you suspect damage to your home: Even if the damage isn't easily seen, shut off electrical power, natural gas and propane tanks to avoid fire, electrocution, or explosions.
- Use battery-powered lanterns to light homes rather than candles: Candles could trigger an explosion if there is a gas leak.
- Use generators at least 20 feet from your home: Generators create carbon monoxide. In enclosed spaces, the carbon monoxide can build up and cause sickness or death.
- Throw out food if you can't be sure it's safe: Throw out any refrigerated food if your power was out for four hours or more. If frozen foods still have ice crystals, they can be refrozen. Any food that was touched by floodwaters – even canned food – should be thrown out.
- Look out for mold: Follow the recommended steps for cleaning mold growth. More details are here: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/mold/index.htm>.
- Check your water supply. If you have municipal water, run your faucet for at least five minutes before using it. If you have a well that touched flood water, follow steps to disinfect it. Well water testing instructions from the Kenosha County Division of Health are available here: <http://bit.ly/KCWellTesting>.

For more information, visit the Wisconsin Department of Health Services' Flood Hazards and Recovery page at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/flood/index.htm>.

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