Emergency Preparedness

Using Well Water after a Flood

After a flood, your well water may be contaminated with bacteria and chemicals that can make you sick.

First steps

Stop using your well water for drinking, cooking, and washing yourself.

Remember: drinking water includes water used for drinking, making formula, juice, and ice cubes; washing fruit and vegetables; and brushing your teeth.

Stay away from your well pump when it is flooded—you could get an electric shock.

Hire a certified well contractor to check your well and its wiring and to restart the well pump, if needed.

Find a list of certified well contractors at [www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water/wellcontractors.asp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water/wellcontractors.asp)
Once your well is working again, follow these steps:

1. **Flush the well.** Run a tap until the water runs clear to get rid of floodwater.

2. **Disinfect the well.**
   For instructions, visit our website at [www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water/docs/DisinfectWaterWell.pdf](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water/docs/DisinfectWaterWell.pdf)

3. **Flush the well again.** Make sure that you run the tap long enough to flush all the disinfectant from the well.

4. **Test the water** for bacteria before you use it for anything other than household cleaning.
   To find a water testing lab, visit [www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water/waterlabs.asp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water/waterlabs.asp)

5. **Test the water** for chemicals if:
   - a spill occurred near your well, such as from an oil tank
   - the water is cloudy or has an unusual smell
   - two years have passed since the last chemical test

**After the test results**

If the water does not run clear or the test shows contamination in your well, contact Nova Scotia Environment for advice.