

Using Well Water after a Flood



After a flood, your well water may be contaminated with bacteria and chemicals that can make your water unsafe to drink.

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 <https://novascotia.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 <https://novascotia.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 <https://novascotia.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 and Climate Change for advice.

You can find information

on how to make sure your well water is safe and how to read the results of a water test at <https://novascotia.ca/well-water-testing/> or call your local Environment and Climate Change office at **1-877-9ENVIRO (1-877-936-8476)**