

## **Flooding and Water Wells**

Water wells completed in river valleys are particularly prone to contamination events such as flooding, and the water may become unsafe to drink before overland flooding actually occurs. Therefore, it is important to monitor your water well very closely for signs that it may be affected by high water conditions or flooding.

Water from flood-affected wells will also be unsafe to drink during the flood event and usually for some time after the event has passed.

If you notice a change in your well water supply (clarity, color, odor, taste, etc.), discontinue drinking the water and use an alternate water supply that is known to be safe for drinking, such as bottled water or a treated municipal water supply.

Well water can also be made safe for drinking by bringing it to a rolling boil for a minimum of 1 minute, and then cooling it in a sanitized container for future use.

Water from flood-affected wells should not be consumed without boiling it first, and this precaution should remain in effect until the well water supply is tested for bacteriological quality and confirmed as being safe to drink.

If you are at all unsure about the safety of your water supply, it is recommended that you use an alternate water source that is known to be safe for drinking, such as bottled water or a treated municipal water supply.

Once the flood event has passed, water wells should be assessed for damage, repaired and serviced if necessary, shock chlorinated, and then tested for bacteriological quality and confirmed as being safe to drink.

Water cisterns that have been affected by flood waters will need to be pumped out, and properly cleaned and disinfected prior to re-filling with safe municipally treated water.

Water sampling kits can be picked up at the Environmental Public Health and Support Services Building at the address below. If you have any questions about your water supply, please contact a Public Health Inspector at 403-823-3341.