



## Mendocino County Public Health Department

*Healthy People, Healthy Communities*

**Dr. Andrew Coren, County Health Officer**



# Press Release

*Not for op-ed*

---

Date: January 17, 2023

**TO: MENDOCINO COUNTY NEWS MEDIA**

**FR: MENDOCINO COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH**

**Public Notice:** Mendocino County has received a significant amount of rain in a relatively short period of time, causing localized flooding in low-lying areas along the Russian and Navarro rivers. Flood waters may contain human fecal material, livestock manure, and other hazardous materials and should be approached with caution.

The floods will leave a mess behind them, and people will want to clean up their property and repair their homes as soon as possible so they can move forward with their lives. Some simple precautions can help protect their health and safety as they do so. Here are some tips to stay safe as the flood waters recede:

- Water that is contaminated may cause gastrointestinal illnesses when ingested, with symptoms including vomiting, diarrhea or nausea. Avoid any contact with flood water due to the potential for high bacteria levels, particularly if you have any open cuts or sores. If exposed, you should wash thoroughly with soap to remove any potential contaminants and apply antibiotic ointment to any wounds to discourage infection.
- If you suspect your drinking water has been impacted, your best options are using bottled water or bringing your water to a rolling boil for one minute. Do not use contaminated water to wash dishes, prepare food, make ice, brush teeth, or make baby formula.
- If flood water reached your well or covered the top of your well casing, assume your well may be contaminated. You can sample your well water for Total Coliform and E. coli through Alpha Analytical Labs in Ukiah if you believe your well may be impacted, and you can contact Mendocino County Environmental Health at (707) 234-6625 for information regarding water well disinfection.
- DO NOT eat foods that have come into contact with flood waters. Throw away food that cannot be kept cold or properly heated due to lack of power.
- Don't use a generator, pressure washer, charcoal grill, camp stove, or any other gasoline- or charcoal-burning device inside your home, garage, or near a window, door, or vent. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas. If carbon monoxide poisoning is suspected, seek fresh air and consult with a health care professional immediately.
- If there is standing water in your home, never turn power on or off yourself- contact an electrician.

- Remove mold by washing with soap and water and letting surfaces dry completely. Some materials such as moldy clothing, ceiling tiles, and sheet rock may need to be replaced. If mold-related illness is suspected, consult a health care professional.
- Remember to frequently wash your hands with soap and clean water! If clean water is not available, use hand sanitizer. Wash your hands often, especially before preparing food, before eating, after using the restroom, and after any cleanup activities. Washing your hands will help prevent illness.

The Mendocino County Public Health Department will continue to monitor the situation in order to help protect our community's health. Please contact Environmental Health at (707) 234-6625 if you notice any problems or have questions.