

Water may not be safe to drink, clean with, or bathe in after an emergency such as a flood. During and after a disaster, water can become contaminated with microorganisms, such as bacteria, sewage, heating oil, agricultural or industrial waste, chemicals, and other substances that can cause illness or death.

People with drinking water wells in flooded areas should assume that their water is contaminated, and take precautions to protect health if any of the following conditions exist:

- if the well is flooded or in close proximity to flooded areas.
- if there has been a change in water quality (odor or taste).

Until a water test confirms that the water is safe use bottled water, or boil water for one minute to make it safe for:

- drinking
- cooking
- making juice or ice
- washing fruits and vegetables
- brushing teeth

**Do not use water for infant formula until a water test confirms it is safe.**

If water smells of petroleum do not use it for drinking, cooking or bathing.

## Water Testing

For a free water testing kit, contact your local District Office of the Vermont Department of Health.

## Disinfection of Private Wells

Our [fact sheet on disinfecting drinking water](#) has detailed information about testing for contamination and disinfecting contaminated wells.

For more information dial **2-1-1**.  
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