

# FLOODING

## Instructions if you have an artesian or surface well

Flooding poses a risk of contaminating the water in private wells, which can cause gastroenteritis.

### During the flooding

To prevent the risk of disease, the Public Health Department (DSPU) of the Outaouais Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) encourages the public to follow the instructions below:

- ◆ If your land is flooded, **consider the water in your well to be non-potable**,
  - ◇ If the water looks normal, boil it for at least 1 minute at a rolling boil before using it for drinking, preparing food (including baby bottle preparation) and brushing your teeth. Bottled water is also a good option.
  - ◇ If the water is cloudy, if it has an unusual smell, or if you suspect chemical contamination, do not boil it; use bottled water.



**Until you know whether your well water meets the microbiological testing standards, boil it for 1 minute or drink bottled water.**

### After the flooding

- ◆ Wait at least 10 days after the flood waters have finally receded to disinfect the well.
- ◆ One week after disinfecting your well, have a microbiological contaminant test done on the water. The results will determine whether the water is fit for consumption.
  - ◇ Fecal bacteria must not be detected when the well water is tested. If those bacteria are present, you must continue to boil the well water. The disinfection and testing steps will then have to be repeated.
- ◆ As a precaution, have your water tested again 4 weeks after the last disinfection treatment of your well to ensure that the water is still fit for consumption.



**If you suspect chemical contamination (hydrocarbons, pesticides, etc.), in addition to the testing for microbiological contaminants, testing for other parameters becomes relevant.**

For more information about well disinfection and testing, see the information document called “In the event of a flood” on Urgence Québec’s website:

<https://www.urgencequebec.gouv.qc.ca/En/Pages/default.aspx>

**In the event of symptoms potentially related to water quality, call Info-santé at 811 or see a health care professional.**