

## PUBLIC HEALTH FACT SHEET

No. 101.5

### *FLOODS AND PERSONAL SAFETY*

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#### THE FLOOD IS OVER - WHAT DO I DO?

Floodwater can be extremely polluted so follow these rules to reduce risk of injury, sickness or infection:

- DO NOT eat food that has been in contact with floodwater. IF IN DOUBT THROW IT OUT.
- Tap water may be used for drinking and food preparation if the local water supply authority has indicated that supplies are safe for consumption.
- Do not handle wet electrical equipment.
- Avoid wading even in shallow water as it may be contaminated – if you must enter shallow floodwater, wear solid boots or shoes for protection.
- Beware of snakes, spiders and other animals that may move to drier areas in your house.
- Check with Police for safe routes before driving anywhere.

#### **INSIDE**

- Check your home for damage to windows, wall or roof
- For emergency assistance call your local Emergency Service on 8922 3630.
- If you're returning to your home, make sure electricity and gas is off before going inside. Use only a torch until you're sure there is no gas around.
- Check that your neighbours are OK.
- Remove what excess water you can and mop sodden carpets.
- For information on food safety after a power failure contact your local Environmental Health office on 1800 095 646.
- Look out for spiders, snakes and other animals that may have moved inside to escape the flood.

#### **APPLIANCES**

- When you return to your home after a flood, do not use any electrical appliances which were flooded, and don't handle any wet electrical equipment.
- Do not try to replace circuit fuses or switch power on to wiring or other equipment, which has been flooded until the electrical installation is thoroughly dry and has been checked by a licensed electrical contractor.
- Have gas appliances inspected and cleaned to prevent a gas explosion or fire.
- Check your smoke detectors are still working.

***OUTSIDE***

- Beware of fallen powerlines, damaged trees and flooded creeks.
- Keep children away from floodwaters.
- If you must enter floodwaters, wear solid shoes, not thongs or bare feet, and check the depth and current with a stick. Stay away from drains, culverts and any water source that is that are more than knee deep.
- Don't drive until you know it is safe.
- Look out for snakes and other animals.