

## PUBLIC HEALTH FACT SHEET

No. 101.8

### ***FOOD, WATER AND KITCHEN CLEAN UP AFTER THE FLOOD***

- Tap water may be used for drinking and food preparation if the Power and Water Corporation has indicated the supplies are safe for consumption.
- Dispose of all food (including frozen) that has come into contact with floodwaters. Some canned food may be kept but if the can is dented or damaged it should be thrown away. **IF IN DOUBT THROW IT OUT!**
- If power is cut for more than 4 hours, food in fridges will spoil. Freezers will generally not defrost and spoil for at least 24 hours if the door has been kept shut.
- Consuming unsafe food may cause serious illness. Throw away any perishable foods such as dairy products, meat, poultry and prepared food that has been un-refrigerated for more than 4 hours.
- NEVER refreeze frozen foods that have thawed. It should be consumed within 24 hours or disposed of. **IF IN DOUBT THROW IT OUT!**
- Dishes, pots and pans that have come into contact with floodwater should be carefully inspected, washed and sanitised before they are used again. Dishes with deep cracks should be thrown away, as they cannot be adequately sanitised.
- Discard any items made of porous material, such as wood, plastic or rubber.
- Wash any remaining items in hot soapy water, using a brush if necessary to remove dirt. Equipment that can be taken apart should be cleaned in pieces and then rinsed in clean hot water.

#### **SANITISING**

After washing and rinsing, sanitise items as follows:

- Immerse glass, porcelain, china and enamelware for 10 minutes in a disinfecting solution of 1 tablespoon of chlorine bleach per 2 litres of hot water. Air-dry dishes. Do not use a towel
- Disinfect silverware, metal utensils, and pots and pans by boiling in water for 10 minutes. Chlorine bleach should not be used in this case because it reacts with many metals and causes them to darken
- Domestic dishwashers are capable of sanitising all eating and cooking utensils as part of the normal cycle.
- Dishwashers: Do not use a dishwasher that has been exposed to flood water.
- Cupboards and counters need to be cleaned with hot soapy water and rinsed with a chlorine bleach solution before storing dishes.
- If you have any refrigerated medications especially insulin products, contact your pharmacist before use.