



## **Is My Water Safe To Drink?** *Information for Homeowners After a Flood*

### **Homeowners using drinking water from a city or other public water system:**

- Listen for public announcements regarding the safety of your water supply.

### **Homeowners using private wells for drinking water:**

- Flooded wells are contaminated with bacteria and may be contaminated with chemicals.
- If chemical contamination is suspected, contact your local public health unit or the North Dakota Department of Health for advice. This would apply, for example, if your water has an uncharacteristic and strong chemical taste or odor. Use bottled water until advised by health authorities that your water is safe to drink.
- If no chemical contamination is suspected, disinfect and test flooded wells after flood waters recede. Contact your local public health unit or North Dakota Department of Health for specific guidance. Until testing shows your water is safe to drink, boil it until it bubbles vigorously for at least one minute. Let it cool before using. Bottled water also is an option. Boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, cooking, making ice, washing dishes and brushing teeth. Continue to use boiled or bottled water until testing shows your water is safe. Because of special concerns for infants, use only bottled water to mix formula or canned baby formula that requires no additional water be added.

### **Drinking contaminated water can cause illness.**

- If you become ill after drinking contaminated water, you should seek medical attention. The usual symptoms of illness from drinking unsafe water include upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, cramps and headaches.
- Children (especially infants), the elderly, and those who have existing health conditions or severely compromised immune systems are at greater risk of developing complications. Therefore, it is important that they receive medical care if symptoms become worse or do not get better.

For more information, call the North Dakota Department of Health at 701.328.2372.