



**Workers Cleaning up After the Flood:**  
May 9, 2018

**Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health:**

**IMMUNIZATION:**

- Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent the spread of serious infectious diseases.
- Exposure to flood waters does not increase the risk of tetanus, and tetanus immunization campaigns are not needed. While documentation of vaccination is preferred, it should not be a pre-requisite for work
- Immunizations are recommended through all stages of life. Keeping immunizations (vaccinations) up-to-date is important for everyone.
- Certain childhood vaccinations require booster doses to ensure life-long protection from disease.
- All adults should be immunized against diphtheria and tetanus. Booster doses of diphtheria and tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine (Td) are recommended every 10 years. Adults who have not received an adult dose of pertussis-containing vaccine should receive one dose of Tdap vaccine.
- The tetanus vaccine is provided free as a part of the Routine New Brunswick Immunization Schedule for children and adults.
- We encourage all New Brunswickers to always keep their immunizations up to date.

**PROTECTION FROM FLOOD WATERS CONTAMINATED WITH SEWAGE:**

Water contaminated with sewage may carry pathogenic micro-organisms which can make people sick. These pathogens, such as Salmonella or E. coli, are typically spread through the fecal-oral route which means the greatest risk of infection is from touching your mouth with contaminated hands, food or water. If aerosols will occur consideration should be given to a fit tested respirator with HEPA filter.

**Basic Hygiene Practices for Workers and Public involved in Cleanup**

Wash hands with soap and water immediately after being in contact with flood waters or after handling items contaminated by flood waters.

- Avoid touching face, mouth, eyes, nose, or open sores and after being in contact with flood waters or after handling items contaminated by flood waters.
- Wash your hands with soap and water *before* eating, drinking or smoking.



- Wash your hands with soap and water *before* and *after* using the toilet.
- Do **not** smoke or chew tobacco or gum while in contact with flood waters or items contaminated by flood waters.
- Keep open sores, cuts, and wounds covered with clean, dry and waterproof bandages. If you have any open cuts or sores that are exposed to floodwater, keep them as clean as possible by washing them with soap and clean water and applying an antibiotic ointment to discourage infection.
- Gently flush eyes with safe water if flood waters contacts eyes.
- Use waterproof gloves (longer the better) to prevent cuts and contact with flood waters.
- Remove rubber boots and work clothes before leaving worksite.
- Rinse and wash your waders, boots, and gloves used during clean-up, wear gloves for cleaning.

### **WorkSafeNB:**

For workers entering flood damaged areas personal protective equipment (PPE) is an essential safety component when there is potential of injury as a result of an exposure or where a physical, chemical, or biological hazard exists. PPE is designed to protect an employee from possible harm and is required by workplace legislation.

New Brunswick employers must:

- Provide and maintain in good condition the personal protective equipment required, and ensure that the employee is instructed and trained in its proper use and care. You must also ensure the employee wears the equipment.

All employees entering flood damaged area must protect themselves from the hazards of the area. As an employee, you must:

- When using any protective equipment:
  - Use the required equipment according to the instruction and training you have received.
  - Test or visually inspect the equipment before each use.
  - Report any defective equipment to your employer, and not use the defective equipment.
  - Properly care for the equipment while using it.
- When a hazard may irritate or injure the eyes, face, ears or front of the neck, use protective equipment appropriate to the hazard that conforms to the CSA standard CAN/CSA-Z94.3-92, "Industrial Eye and Face Protectors" or a standard offering equal protection.



- Where there is a potential hazard for head injury use use Class E, Type 1 headwear that conforms to ANSI standard ANSI Z89.1-1997, "American National Standard for Industrial Head Protection" or a standard offering equal or better protection.
- Where there is a potential hazard for foot injury, use Grade 1 footwear with sole protection that conforms to CSA standard CAN/CSA-Z195-M92, "Protective Footwear " or a standard offering equal protection.
- Use PPE such as protective gloves, boots, body covering, eye protection, barrier cream or oil, or other protective equipment to provide protection from skin, hand hazards and extremes of heat and cold hazards.