

Tips for Preparing For Possible Flooding

Many Lakes and Rivers are at their highest levels and the weather forecast for the next week predicts additional significant precipitation. This may cause local flooding in some areas or worsen the impact on already flooded areas. **Take this opportunity to protect yourself and your property from potential flooding.** The Leeds Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit advises the following actions you can take to help you prepare for possible flooding.

Before the Flood:

- Watch the weather and take warnings seriously.
- Have a full emergency kit ready to go. Be sure to include important documents, cash and medications.
- Move items likely to be affected by a flood to higher areas where possible.
- Store chemicals, cleaners and gas cans in such a manner as not to contaminate flood water.
- Check that your eavestroughs and landscaping direct water away from your home not into it.
- Ensure drainage ditches around your home are clear and work during periods of heavy rain.
- Label the shut off valves and the direction to turn off the gas, water and power. If you must leave your home because of rising flood waters, turn off the power and gas.
- Have your vehicle filled up and ready to go.
- Have a supply of fuel for generators and pumps. Store fuel in a manner to prevent spills that may contaminate flood water.

Flood water can conceal many hazardous situations. Submerged items with sharp edges may not be seen and can cause injury. Fast moving spring flood waters pose a risk of hypothermia and drowning (even for skilled swimmers) due to the unexpected currents and under water hazards.

The following tips will help protect your family during flooding events:

- Keep your family safe by keeping family members and pets away from and out of the flood water.
- Flood water entering homes and basements may come into contact with electrical outlets, panel boxes, and appliances that may have an electrical component to them. Water conducts electricity – **DO NOT enter areas where electrical systems have been affected as you may be electrocuted.**
- Always wait for clearance from the electrical authority before entering these areas. Building materials, clothing and furniture that have been exposed to flood waters are likely contaminated and can support the growth of mold.
- Some items can be cleaned and disinfected; others may need to be thrown out. Ask for professional advice during clean up. If you try to save and clean items on your own, wear protective clothing, a mask and gloves.
- Well water and septic systems can be affected by flood water, contact the Health Unit for advice.

For more information on flooding please visit the health unit website at www.healthunit.org or call the Health ACTION Line at 1-800-660-5853.

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