ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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For Immediate Release

Health Department Urges Precautions in Aftermath of Flooding

The Oneida County Health Department is urging residents impacted by recent flooding conditions to take precautions when dealing with flood waters resulting from the heavy rains and overflow conditions.

"Flood waters can pose many health risks whether it's running across a roadway or standing in your basement," Phyllis D. Ellis, Director of Health said. Ellis continued, *"For some residents contact with the flood waters are unavoidable, but precautions should be taken to avoid possible injury or illness that could result."*

Waters that pool on streets and properties carry their own risks. Electricity from streetlights and power poles may be active through standing water causing a deadly electric shock to anyone in contact with it. Children playing in contaminated standing water may become sick or bitten by floating insects. Anyone who comes into contact with floodwaters should wash any exposed body parts with soap and disinfected or sanitized water.

Mosquitoes lay eggs near water. Please follow this link to YouTube videos created by the health department.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJsqve1e_PY&feature=youtu.be

Drinking contaminated water could cause serious illness. You cannot assume that the drinking water supply in an area affected by flooding is safe to drink. Listen to local announcements regarding possible boil water notices in your area. Persons with private wells in flooded areas need to be aware of possible contamination by disease-causing organisms making the water unsafe to drink. Do not drink flood water, or use it to wash dishes, brush teeth, or wash/prepare food. **Drink clean, safe water.**

Do not eat any food that may have come into contact with floodwaters. Discard any foods without a waterproof container if there's a chance it has come into contact with floodwaters. Food containers with screw caps, snap lids and home canned foods should be discarded after coming into contact with flood waters, since they cannot be properly disinfected. **When in doubt, throw it out!** Throw away any food and bottled water that comes/may have come into contact with flood water.

Basic hygiene is of particular concern after a flood. Always wash your hands with soap and water that has been boiled and cooled. Hands should be washed before preparing or consuming food, after using the bathroom or changing a diaper, playing with a pet, after handling uncooked food, handling garbage, after tending to someone who in sick or injured, after coughing or sneezing and after handling articles that may have been contaminated by flood waters.

Wound Care is important. Keeping wounds clean and covered is crucial during an emergency. If you have open cuts or sores, keep them as clean as possible by washing well with soap and clean, safe water to control infection. If a wound develops redness, swelling, or drainage, seek immediate medical attention.

The Health Department's Healthy Neighborhood Program staff is available to provide educational information and materials on how to address important health and safety concerns after major flooding. Residents may contact them for these tips at 315-798-5064.

Any questions, please contact The Oneida County Health Department: 315.798. 5064 or the website:
http://ocgov.net/health