

# ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## ADMINISTRATION

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**For Immediate Release**



## Flooding Assistance and Precautions

Oneida County Health Department would like to alert residents who have been impacted by the recent flooding that they can report issues and needs to HOOAD (Herkimer-Oneida Organizations Active in Disaster) by calling 2-1-1.

HOOAD is a humanitarian association of independent organizations that support emergency response efforts in any or all phases of disaster. This local, voluntary association is currently working on plans to identify and meet long-term recovery needs from the recent flooding.

Residents are also asked to be aware of the potential for future flooding as the temperatures become warmer and snow melts. *"As the temperatures increase, flooding can become a problem. It is important to take precautions to avoid the health risks associated with flood water,"* said Phyllis D. Ellis, Director of Health.

If you live in a low-lying area, you may be directed by authorities to evacuate the area. If you are asked to evacuate due to expected flooding, the CDC recommends the following:

- Take only essential items with you.
- If you have time, turn off the gas, electricity, and water.
- Disconnect appliances to prevent electrical shock when power is restored.
- Follow the designated evacuation routes and expect heavy traffic.
- Do not attempt to drive or walk across creeks or flooded roads.

If you are **not** ordered to evacuate it is important to monitor the radio and television for weather updates. It is important to be aware of the following as well:

**Waters that pool** on streets and properties carry their own risks. Do not attempt to drive through flood water. Electricity from streetlights and power poles may be active through standing water causing a deadly electric shock to anyone in contact with it also. Anyone who comes into contact with floodwaters should wash any exposed body parts with soap and disinfected or sanitized water.

**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 is 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 clean water. 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 is 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.

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**Any questions, please contact 2-1-1**