

FLOODS AND HEALTH



Contact with flood waters can cause health problems. Water can contain germs, fecal matter, chemicals and other pollutants.

The most common health effects are skin irritations or infections (contact between water and wounds or cuts) and gastroenteritis (contact between water or soiled objects and the mouth).

Do not use medications that have been in contact with flood water.



Tap water

Water from a waterworks system

Follow the municipality's instructions before drinking it.

Water from a well

Boil water for at least a minute.

- If water is cloudy or has an unusual odour, don't drink it. Drink bottled water.
- Once floodwater has receded, wait 10 days before having well water tested. For more information, go to www.environnement.gouv.qc.ca/Eau/potable/depliant



Food

You can eat non-refrigerated food that hasn't come into contact with floodwater.

Precautions to take:

- Power failure lasting more than 6 hours: carefully sort food items. Avoid food poisoning. For more information, www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca/fr/Consommation/pannes



Floodwater

Contact with floodwater can cause health problems.

Precautions to take:

- Wear rubber gloves to handle soiled objects.
- Always wear boots: avoid all contact with water or wet objects.
- Wear a protective mask (N95) when cleaning: wet and dry surfaces may be contaminated.
- Wash your hands often to avoid contamination with floodwater.
- Don't eat in flooded areas.

Source: Direction régionale de santé publique de Montréal du CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal.



Electricity

If you think your home will be flooded or if water is starting to seep in, turn off the electricity.

Precautions to take:

- Don't use electrical appliances around water: you could get electrocuted.
- Talk to a master electrician before turning the power or heat back on, or using electrical appliances that have come into contact with water.



Mould

Mould can cause or aggravate the following health problems:

- Asthma
- Bronchitis
- Colds
- Allergic rhinitis
- Sinusitis
- Eye, nose or throat irritation

Precautions to take:

- Act as quickly as possible to remove the water.
- Remove damp materials.
- Dry the building.
- Consult a professional cleaning company registered with the Régie du bâtiment du Québec.

For more information, go to

www.santemontreal.qc.ca/inondations/



Gas or propane equipment

Equipment such as gas- or propane-powered pumps, drying equipment or pressure washers release carbon monoxide. This odourless gas can cause serious poisoning or even death.

Precautions to take:

- Don't use gas- or propane-powered equipment indoors.
- Install battery-powered carbon monoxide detectors. If the alarm goes off, leave immediately and call 911.
- Leave immediately and call 911 if you develop a headache, dizziness, fatigue or nausea.
- Don't use space heaters, outdoor cooking and camping equipment or barbecue equipment indoors. They produce carbon monoxide.

HELP AND RESOURCES

Info-Santé and Info-Social: 811 (physical health problems, anxiety, stress, etc.)

Services Québec: 1-877-644-4545 | quebec.ca (services for residents and businesses affected by the flood)

Urgence Québec: urgencequebec.gouv.qc.ca | Facebook | Twitter @urgencequebec (state of the situation and measures to take)

Québec Poison Control Centre: 1-800 463-5060 (poisoning)

Ministère de la Sécurité publique – Financial Aid: securitepublique.gouv.qc.ca |

1-888-643-2433 (services for residents affected by the flood)

City of Montréal: 311 | ville.montreal.qc.ca