

**Insert agency name**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Insert date)

For information, contact:  
(Insert contact information)

## Headline

Recent heavy rains have resulted in flooding in (insert location). As the flood waters recede, many residents will be returning to their homes or businesses. Those buildings that were flooded pose health risks to residents and precautions should be taken, say public health officials.

Flood waters can contain debris, sewage, chemicals and animal waste. When returning to a home or business that was affected by flood water, please take the following precautions:

- Listen for news reports to learn whether the community's water supply is safe to drink.
- Avoid remaining floodwaters; water may be contaminated. Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines. Stay away from downed power lines, and report them to the power company.
- Avoid moving water.
- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- Stay out of any building if it is still surrounded by floodwaters.
- Use extreme caution when entering buildings; there may be hidden damage, particularly in foundations.
- Service damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits and leaching systems as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are serious health hazards.
- Clean and disinfect everything that got wet. Mud left from floodwater can be contaminated.
- Watch out for animals, especially poisonous snakes. Use a stick to poke through debris.
- If your power has been off for a lengthy period of time, throw out any food left in refrigerators or freezers.
- Eliminate standing water by pouring out stagnant water in birdbaths, pet dishes, old tires and any other receptacle in which mosquitoes might breed. This will greatly reduce mosquito populations and the risks of getting a mosquito-borne illness.

Remember to return home only when authorities indicate it is safe. For more information about any of these precautions, please call (insert contact information).