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**\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\***

**TO:** LOCAL MEDIA SOURCES  
**FROM:** JOEL R. STRASZ, HEALTH OFFICER  
**DATE:** JUNE 25, 2017  
**RE:** FLOOD CLEAN-UP SAFETY

Due to recent flooding the Bay County Health Department is urging residents to follow proper clean-up procedures for homes that have experience flood water damage. All flood waters are considered contaminated and extreme caution should be considered during clean up. Flooding is the No. 2 weather-related killer behind heat. More than half of these fatalities occur when someone drives into floodwaters. Do not attempt to drive through a flooded road. The depth of water is not always obvious. Do not drive around a barricade. Barricades are there for your protection. Turn around and go the other way. Do not try to take short cuts--they may be blocked. Stick to designated routes. Be especially cautious driving at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers. Please follow these tips to protect yourself and your family:

- If you have a private water well that was affected by flood waters you should have your well water tested prior to drinking or bathing. The Health Department may test your water and provide collection bottles for sampling. Laboratory services can be reached by calling (989) 895-4006.

- Electrical hazards can be present if your home or basement is flooded or the water has just receded. Wait until all water has receded before attempting any restoration work, and turn off the circuit breaks on any electrical outlets that may have been flooded.
- Be sure to wear disposable gloves during clean-up, and wear old shoes or rubber boots when working in affected areas.
- Minimize the risk for mold, which can cause serious health problems. Remove any standing water and dry indoor areas. Remove and discard anything that cannot be thoroughly dried. Moveable objects should be put outdoors to dry. Exposure of these items to the sun's ultraviolet rays will naturally disinfect the surfaces.
- Walls and floors should be washed with soap and warm or hot water and disinfected by using an antibacterial disinfectant.
- Electrical appliances, upholstered furniture, carpeting, non-canned fruits and vegetables that have been flooded are not salvageable and must be discarded. Clothes, bedding and stuffed toys can be laundered.
- Discard wooden cutting boards, plastic utensils, baby bottle nipples and pacifiers that have been affected by flooding. Cardboard juice and milk boxes, baby food and formula jars should also be thrown away because they cannot be effectively cleaned and sanitized
- Thoroughly wash all metal pans, ceramic dishes and utensils that came in contact with flood water with hot soapy water and sanitize by boiling them in clean water or by immersing them for 15 minutes in a solution of 1 teaspoon of chlorine bleach per quart of water.
- Throw away any food not in a water proof container if there is the chance it came into contact with flood water. Containers with screw-caps, snap-lids, crimped caps (soda pop bottles), twist caps, flip tops, and home canned foods should be discarded because they cannot be cleaned and sanitized.

For additional information, please contact the Bay County Health Department at (989) 895-4006. Individuals are encouraged to monitor local media and follow the guidance of local emergency responders. As information becomes available, it will be updated on the Bay County Emergency Services webpage at: <http://www.baycounty-mi.gov/ESHS/June-Flooding-Throughout-Bay-County.aspx>.

cc: James A. Barcia, Bay County Executive  
C. Gignac, PIO  
Environmental Health Division Staff  
File(s)