



News Release

109 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
www.vdh.virginia.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 29, 2011

For More Information Contact

Bob Spieldenner or Cheryle Rodriquez : 804-674-2400

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH WANTS YOU TO STAY SAFE DURING RECOVERY

RICHMOND, Va. – The Virginia Department of Health urges residents to take precautions as they work to recover from the recent hurricane.

Hurricanes, especially if accompanied by a tidal surge or flooding, can contaminate the public water supply or residential wells. Contaminated drinking water or unrefrigerated foods may cause illness. Residents are urged to take precautions as they use power tools during cleanup of storm debris and home repairs.

Listen for public announcements about the safety of the municipal water supply. Use bottled water for cooking or drinking.

Follow these safety tips to stay safe:

- If your locality lifts a “boil water” advisory, run your tap for several minutes. Empty your icemaker and discard the first new batch of ice. Wash dirty dishes in soap and hot water or run your dishwasher. If your refrigerator has a water dispenser, run it until it is empty and let it refill.
 - Five community water systems are under boil water advisories:
 - Isle of Wight County: Rushmere Subdivision and Carrsville
 - Hanover County: Spring Meadows and Meadow Gate
 - King George County: Presidential Lakes Section 14
 - Greensville County Water and Sewer Authority: Jarratt
 - Southampton County: Drewryville
- Dispose perishable foods that have been without refrigeration for more than two hours. Fish, poultry, meat, eggs, milk and other dairy products, and leftovers are especially high risk. *When in doubt, throw it out.*

- When power returns, inspect the food in your freezer. If there are still ice crystals in the package it is probably safe to refreeze. Use a thermometer to check the temperature and if your freezer remained under 40 F, the food is probably safe to refreeze. Otherwise, it is probably not safe. *When in doubt, throw it out.*
- If you have medication that requires refrigeration but you lost power, check with the pharmacy on the label. A pharmacist can advise you if it can still be used.
- CARBON MONONXIDE IS A SILENT KILLER! Don't bring generators into the house and keep them at least 10 feet away from your home. Don't use camp stoves and lanterns without ventilation. *Never* use stoves for heating. Any of these can cause deadly buildup of carbon monoxide.
- If floodwaters covered your well, you should disinfect it. Call your local health department for advice. If you are concerned about your well water, health officials can provide you a list of testing services.
- Empty outdoor containers, tarps and other items around your house which create breeding sites for mosquitoes. Use repellent when outside.
- Avoid using candles, especially around small children. Use battery-powered lamps and flashlights.
- During cleanup, avoid overexertion and strain in lifting and moving heavy objects or loads.
- Accidents during storm cleanup are frequent and often lead to severe injuries. Be especially careful while using chainsaws. Deaths can occur when operators are struck by falling limbs or trees. Wear protective gear, including sturdy boots, safety goggles and cut-resistant leg wear.
- If you have questions about the health tips, call your local health department.
- Do not allow children to play in floodwater areas. Wash children's hands frequently (always before meals), and do not allow children to play with floodwater-contaminated toys that have not been disinfected. You can disinfect toys using a solution of one cup of bleach in five gallons of water.

For more information, visit the Virginia Department of Emergency Management website at www.vaemergency.gov or the Virginia Department of Health website at www.vdh.virginia.gov.

###