

2022 Flood Recovery Information Park County

June 20th, 2022



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Flood Recovery Information

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THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF A FLOOD

Any natural disaster can provoke a wide range of emotions in a community. The emotional impact of a flood can spread far-and-wide affecting those directly impacted, community members, volunteers, first- responders, government officials and agency employees. It is important to recognize and manage our emotional health. If unable to do so, it can create additional emotional health, mental health and physical health concerns. It is important to take care of yourself during difficult times.

Preparing for Emotional Reactions

Some typical emotional reactions may include the following and should be addressed to reduce the risk of longer term symptoms. These things can impact youth and adults; however, youth may have a harder time expressing or describing how they feel.

- Re-occurring dreams, nightmares, night terrors or insomnia
- Trouble concentrating or remembering things
- Bursts of anger or irritability
- Becoming overprotective of your family's safety or possessions
- Feelings of being numb, disconnected or withdrawn
- Avoiding reminders of the flood, fear or discomfort of water
- Becoming tearful, crying or feeling sad for no apparent reason
- Physical symptoms, such as headaches, stomachaches, digestive issues, muscle tension, etc.
- Less tolerant of those who have not been impacted by the flood
- Intense need to move or relocate
- Increased need to use alcohol or other substances to cope with the stress or numb emotions

Managing Stress, Anxiety and Other Difficult Emotions

These are some simple coping strategies you might utilize. These suggestions do not replace the benefit of counseling services, but can assist when you do not have access to counseling support.

- Limit exposure to pictures, news, social media, etc. which may trigger emotional responses. *(It is important to stay informed if you are living in an immediate risk area. Get the information directly from those with the most current information. The Park County Flood Information Hotline is 406 222-4131.*
- Educate yourself about health hazards and safety information
- Keep to your daily routine the best you can. This is especially important for youth who benefit from the security of structure.
- Exercise, eat well, and get good sleep.
- Practice deep breathing. Breathe in from nose, hold a couple seconds, and slowly exhale from mouth.
- Stay busy physically and mentally. Find something to do that makes you feel productive or spend time doing things you enjoy.
- Communicate with friends, family and others in your supportive network.
- Stay in touch with your core values and belief systems
- Continue to laugh. Find things that bring out your sense of humor.
- Use creativity to express yourself. The arts can be a great thing.
- Don't take on more tasks than what you feel you can do. Limit the feelings of being overwhelmed or obligated to do things.
- TALK TO A PROFESSIONAL who can help you process.

For those struggling with depression or anxiety associated with the flooding event, call 406-586-3333

If you or anyone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide, please reach out to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, please call 1-800-273-8255

Call, chat or text 988

PERMIT REQUIREMENTS FOR COUNTY RESIDENTS WITH FLOOD DAMAGE

Attention landowners located within the 100-year floodplain:

Please know that you may need a permit before you begin rebuilding from the flood.

If you don't know if you are located within the 100-year floodplain you can check the FEMA map service center here <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>.

If you are located within the 100-year floodplain you will be receiving a letter the week of June 20th regarding permitting requirements as well as information on damage assessments. If you would like more information you can contact the Park County Planning and Floodplain office at planning@parkcounty.org or visit the county website at <https://www.parkcounty.org/Government-Departments/Planning/Floodplain/>.



**LANDOWNERS IN THE
100-YEAR
FLOODPLAIN:
YOU MAY NEED A PERMIT**

If you are located within the 100-year floodplain you will be receiving a letter regarding permitting requirements as well as information on damage assessments.

To see a [floodplain map](https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home) of your area:
<https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>



Park County Health Department Environmental Health
414 East Callender Street Livingston, MT 59047
406-222-4145
www.parkcounty.org

Food Safety

What is the risk?

Floodwaters can contaminate food, cookware, utensils and appliances with harmful bacteria, viruses, or chemicals. Also, power outages can cause cold or frozen foods to warm to a temperature that can make them unsafe to eat.

What foods do I need to discard, and which ones are safe to keep?

Follow the guidance below to decide which foods need to be tossed out, and which foods can still be used.

- If the food is not packaged, or the package is not watertight, and it has been in contact with floodwater, it **should be discarded**.
- Food in crown-capped bottles and screw top containers **should be discarded**. It is very difficult to open this packaging without spreading the contamination to the food.

If you choose to keep sealed foods that have contacted floodwater, wash and sanitize the outer package before opening it.

- Wash the sealed exterior with warm water and soap. Then, rinse off all soap.
- Soak the clean cans or packages for 15 minutes in a household bleach solution. Mix the solution by adding **1 cup household bleach per 5 gallons of water**.
- Rinse the cans or packages with clean water.
- Re-inspect the packages. If there are any signs of damage to the package once it is clean, the food **should be discarded**.

My power was out for a while. What about foods that need refrigeration?

Flood events often include power outages. Refrigerators and freezers will not operate when the power is out and could be down for hours or days. Foods that require refrigeration for safety include meat, eggs, cheese, dairy products, cut leafy greens, cut melons, leftover prepared foods, and any other food labeled “Keep Refrigerated.” The following tips will help you evaluate the foods in your refrigerator:

- First, if the food in your refrigerator came into contact with floodwater, it **should be discarded** based on the guidance above.
- Food in a refrigerator should be safe as long as power was not out for longer than 4 hours. **If food has been out of refrigeration (above 40 degrees Fahrenheit) for longer than 4 hours, it should be discarded.**
- Some hard or processed cheeses, condiments, or sauces may be safe to keep under conditions that would make other foods unsafe. Please call one of our food safety experts if you want more detailed, specific information about a certain food product.

Can I keep frozen foods?

- If the food is still frozen solid and has not contacted floodwater, it should be safe to keep.
- If the food is not frozen solid, follow the time and temperature guidelines in the section above.

Other Considerations:

- When the power is out, avoid opening the door of your fridge or freezer. The unit will keep foods cold, and even frozen, for several hours if the door remains closed.
- When meat warms up or thaws, it often produces juice. **Always discard** any food in the refrigerator that has come into contact with raw meat juices.
- **Never taste food to determine if it is safe to eat!** You can't rely on taste or smell to determine whether bacteria have grown on the food, or if it has been otherwise contaminated.



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Wells and Drinking Water

What is the risk?

Floodwaters contain bacteria, viruses and other chemicals like petroleum and pesticides. Drinking water that is contaminated with floodwater can make you sick.

If the floodwater surrounds or submerges your well, the contaminants can very easily get into the well. When you turn on faucets in your home, the contaminated water is spread throughout your house plumbing. Even after the floodwater recedes, your well water may still be unsafe to drink.

If your well is underwater or surrounded by water:

*If your well is covered by floodwater, or if floodwater is surrounding your well casing (standpipe), **you should NOT use the water for drinking, cooking or brushing your teeth.** Instead, use an alternative safe water source like **bottled or boiled water.***

- You can use **bottled water**, or you can fill clean, reusable containers and bottles from a source that you know is safe.
- You can **boil water** to kill bacteria and viruses. Boil water for one minute, let it cool, and transfer it to a clean container. Boiling can make the water taste flat. You can get rid of the flat taste by shaking the container, or pouring from one container into another.

Once the floodwater has receded:

Even after the floodwater is no longer surrounding your well, your water may still be contaminated and unsafe to drink. The flood could have washed silt and debris into your well. Parts of your well, like the cap, casing, electrical wiring or pump, may have been

damaged. Consider hiring a professional well service company to evaluate and rehabilitate your well and associated components.

Testing your water:

A bacteria test is an indicator of contamination. If the test shows that the water does not have bacteria, you can safely assume that other floodwater contaminants have been removed as well.

- **Procure a water test bottle.** The bottles can be picked up at the Health Department. There is also a supply of water test bottles at the Emigrant Store, at the Chamber of Commerce in Gardiner and at the Firehall in Cooke City.
 - **Do not bring water in your own container!** The test will not be accurate. We will not accept samples unless they are in the provided sterile bottle.
- **Follow the directions** to collect a sample from your house tap.
- **Return the bottle** to one of the following locations:
 - **Park County Health Department:** Through the end of the widespread flooding period, Park County Health Department will accept water sample bottles Monday and Wednesday before noon at 414 E. Callender, Livingston, MT. Your test results will be available 24-48 hours after you submit your sample.
 - **Bridger Analytics Lab:** Bottle drop off at 7359 Pioneer Way, Bozeman MT 59718. 506-582-0822 www.bridgeranalyticallab.com.

If you have further questions about safe drinking water or wells, please call the Health Department at 405-222-4145



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Septic Systems

What is the risk?

Many flooded homes are connected to on-site septic. Septic systems typically consist of a tank and a disposal field, and are designed to both get rid of the sewage and to treat the wastewater before it enters groundwater or surface water. A septic system that is affected by flooding will not perform correctly. Either the sewage will back up into the house or crawl space or the wastewater will enter groundwater and surface water with no treatment. Because wastewater contains bacteria, viruses and anything else that goes down home drains, contact with floodwater and areas of high groundwater can potentially make you sick.

Sewage from my septic system backed up in my home. What should I do?

To clean and disinfect indoor areas that came into contact with sewage or floodwater:

- **Wear protective, non-absorbent clothing** such as rubber boots and waterproof gloves.
- **Discard** items that cannot be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. This might include carpet, upholstered furniture and mattresses.
- **Clean** walls, hard-surfaced floors and other surfaces with soap and warm water.
- **Disinfect** clean surfaces with a household bleach solution of **½ cup of bleach in one gallon of water.**

BE CAREFUL! Never mix ammonia cleaners with bleach! Toxic and potentially deadly vapors will form. Read cleaner labels to check for ammonia, as some brand names don't make it clear.

How do I know if my septic system is OK to use after the flood?

First, look at the area around the septic system. In places where the floodwater was moving, the system may have been uncovered as the topsoil washed away.

- If the system is exposed, **don't use it and call the Health Department.** We can inspect your system and let you know if it needs to be repaired or replaced, or if you can cover it back up with clean soil and continue to use it.

*Pump your septic tank(s) soon after the flood to remove silt, dirt and debris that may have washed in. **Do not pump your tank if the area is still saturated or flooded!** This can cause the tank to float up out of the ground and will damage your system.*

After you begin to use your system again, if you notice your house drains are abnormally slow, that sewage is surfacing outside on the ground or that sewage is backing-up in your house, immediately stop using the system.

- Floodwater can clog parts of your septic system (tanks, sewer lines and drainfield pipes) with silt and dirt. You may have to hire a professional septic service company to clean the system out for you before it will work.
- Even after the floodwater has receded, the ground may still be too wet for the system to take any sewage from a house. You may have to wait several days before the soil dries out and the system will work properly.

*In some cases, **the septic system may be too damaged, or may not ever work properly again.** If this happens to you, **call the Health Department.** We will work with you to find the best replacement system solution for your home and property.*

Other Important Information:

If you have to repair or replace your system, **you will need a septic permit** to do that. Contact the Health Department for permitting information.



Utilities and Propane

Safety Messages

- Flood restoration or demolition may involve heavy equipment like backhoes, front-end loaders or excavators. Call 811 prior to any excavation on your property to get underground utilities located. There is no cost to you for this service.
- Flood waters may expose underground utilities, including electric power and gas. If you suspect any underground utilities have been exposed, call your power company and report what you've found.
- Electric wiring, outlets and the use of electric tools and appliances around water can be dangerous. Avoid using any power tools in or around water.
- Stay away from any low-hanging or downed power lines and call 911 or your power company
- If you smell natural gas, call 911 and your propane supplier immediately.
- We recommend you wait until flood waters have completely subsided and are not expected to rise again before starting any restoration efforts. Working in flooded conditions can involve hidden dangers and damage. Only after the flood waters have subsided can a full assessment be completed.

Electric Outages/Restoring Gas Service

- If you are out of power or want your gas service restored, call your power company or propane supplier.



Park County Mosquito Supervisor, Theresa Pospichal
119 South 3rd Street, Livingston, MT 59047
406-222-4158 (office) or 406-223-1306 (cell)
tpospichal@parkcounty.org

Mosquito Precautions

What is the risk?

Even after floodwater recedes, there will be more standing water than is typical in our neighborhoods. Standing water can increase the number of mosquitoes. Mosquito bites cause itching and discomfort, and for some people can cause an allergic response or skin infections from scratching.

Some mosquitoes carry disease. The most common mosquito-carried disease in our state is West Nile Virus (WNV). Typically, WNV is not a problem until later in the summer, and Montana has had only a handful of human WNV cases in each of the past few years.

- Many people infected with WNV do not have symptoms, while others feel mildly ill. Some individuals experience severe symptoms including fever, headache, neck stiffness, weakness, vision loss, numbness, disorientation, coma, or permanent paralysis or neurological effects.
- There is no WNV vaccine available for humans.
- WNV can infect and be fatal to horses. There is a vaccine available for horses. Consult your veterinarian.
- Park County was already participating in WNV monitoring during the summer of 2022, separate from the flooding incident.
- Flood water mosquitoes are not typically WNV vectors.

How can I protect myself from mosquito bites?

As you clean up and recover from the flood, you are likely to spend a lot of time outdoors. To protect yourself from exposure to mosquitoes and mosquito bites:

- Mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn. Be sure to use insect repellent and wear long sleeves, pants, hat and neck kerchief at these times or consider staying indoors during these hours. Spray clothing, kerchief and hat with repellent.
- Use insect repellent. The most effective repellents contain DEET. Follow label directions and precautions, including instructions for reapplying periodically. There is no need to use a repellent that contains over 50% DEET. To protect your face, use your hands to rub the repellent on your face; don't spray directly on your face. Spray your hat, clothes, kerchiefs -- not just your exposed skin.
- Children can be protected with DEET but the concentration of DEET should not be higher than 30%. 10% is the lowest effective concentration for children and adults. Keeping children indoors or covered with clothing and hats when outside offers considerable protection from bites.
- Ensure you have good screens on your windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out. Repair window and door screens and add screens where needed.

How can I help reduce the mosquito population?

Not all water is ideal for mosquito breeding. Running water and water that does not have much plant life doesn't attract mosquitoes. Shallow, standing water, even if it is only there temporarily, will attract mosquitoes. In hot weather, it only takes five days for standing water to produce mosquito offspring.

- If you have standing water in your yard from the flooding, you can use a mosquito dunk to keep the larvae from reaching adulthood. These are typically available at hardware stores but be sure to follow the directions on the label.
- Decrease the breeding areas for mosquitoes as best you can. It doesn't take much water for mosquito larvae to thrive.
 - Empty and remove any containers that collect water, like plastic jugs, empty barrels, old tires, tin cans, buckets and bottles.
 - Turn over wheelbarrows, canoes and small boats or cover them with a tarp. If covering with a tarp, make sure it does not sag down and collect water.
 - Cover trash containers or drill holes in the bottom of recycle containers to keep rain water from collecting there.
 - Empty or change wading pools and birdbaths every few days.
 - Inspect eavestrough to ensure water is draining properly.
 - Keep grass cut short and shrubbery trimmed so adult mosquitoes don't hide in the shaded areas during the day.
 - Restore drainage to flood-impacted areas as soon as possible.



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Mold

What is the risk?

Mold spores are a natural part of the environment and may begin growing indoors on wet materials after a flood. There are many types of mold, but none of them will grow without water or moisture. Some types of mold can make you sick, and the health impacts of mold can vary from person to person. Potential health effects of mold include:

- Allergic reactions in sensitive individuals.
- Asthma attacks in people with asthma who are allergic to mold.
- Irritation of the eyes, skin, nose, throat and lungs.
- Lung infections

If you suspect mold exposure is making you sick, consult your healthcare provider.

How do I clean up mold after a flood?

The faster and more completely that you can dry out a house after a flood, the more successful you will be at preventing and eliminating mold growth.

Resources

For more information on drying out a home and other detailed instructions, see the FEMA/Red Cross publication “Repairing Your Flooded Home” at www.redcross.org.

For info on cleanup and remediation go to <https://www.cdc.gov/mold/cleanup.htm>

The above info was compiled from CDC, EPA, FEMA, Montana Department of Health and Human Services, and American Lung Association.

How To Avoid and Report Scam Artists After a Disaster

Following a natural disaster, many businesses, voluntary, faith-based, and community-based organizations, government agencies and committed citizens come together to try and meet the needs of the affected individuals and communities. Unfortunately, disasters often bring out criminals who prey on the needs of disaster survivors by offering fraudulent services.

If you suspect anyone – an inspector, disaster survivor, or someone posing as one of these – of fraudulent activities, call the FEMA toll-free Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721, or Park County Sheriff's Office. If you reside in Livingston city limits, call the Livingston Police Department.

To help you spot fraud, here is a list of consumer safety tips from federal and state agencies:

- Carefully question strangers who show up and knock on your door, offering repairs.
- Never give any personal financial information, such as an insurance number or Social Security Number.
- Get three written estimates for repair work. Then check credentials and contact your local Better Business Bureau or Chamber of Commerce to learn about any complaints against the contractor or business.
- Before work begins, make sure you get a written contract detailing all the work to be performed, the costs, a projected completion date, and how to negotiate changes and settle disputes.
- Make sure the contract clearly states who will obtain the necessary permits. Consider having a lawyer review the contract if substantial costs are involved. Keep a copy of the signed contract.
- If the contractor provides any guarantees, they should be written into the contract clearly, stating what is guaranteed, who is responsible for the guarantee and how long the guarantee is valid.
- Never sign any document without fully reading and understanding it. If you don't understand something, ask for an explanation.
- Get a loan quote from someone who is not recommended by your contractor and compare their amounts, repayment schedules, and rates. If they differ

significantly, ask both parties why.

- Pay only by check or a credit card. A reasonable down payment may be required to buy materials for some projects, but don't pay anything without a signed contract.

If FEMA disaster assistance becomes available:

- There is never a fee to apply for FEMA disaster assistance or to receive it.
- There is no fee for FEMA or U.S. Small Business Administration property damage inspections.
- The only ways to register for FEMA help are to call 800-621-3362 (TTY: 800-462-7585) or visit www.DisasterAssistance.gov. Or visit m.fema.gov from a smartphone or Web-enabled device.
- Government workers will never ask for a fee or payment. They wear a photo ID. Watch out for middle men who promise you will receive money, especially if they ask for an up-front payment.

More warning signs:

- The contractor demands full payment up front or in cash only.
- The contractor has no physical address or refuses to show ID.
- If you have to borrow to pay for the repairs, the contractor steers you toward a particular lender or tries to act as an intermediary between you and a lender.

June 2022 Flood Property Damage Form

The Montana Department of Emergency Services is seeking assistance from the public to document damage resulting from the flood event that occurred the week of June 13th, 2022.

This information will be used to assist in collecting consolidated impact information and will be provided to other State and Federal agencies as they assess the damage.

DISCLAIMER- This survey is not intended to trigger an immediate response. If you are in a life-threatening situation or immediate danger please dial 911

Completing this survey is not an offer of financial aid.

If possible please complete this form electronically. It can be accessed through <https://des.mt.gov/> or the below QR code. If you complete this form by paper please return to:

Cooke City - Monica Tietz at the Cooke City store

Gardiner – Colette Daigle-Berg Chamber of Commerce

Livingston – Park County Health Department



Contact information

First and last name:

Phone number:

Email:

Damage information

Basement affected: Yes No

Foundation affected: Yes No

Utilities: On Off

Inches of water inside home: _____

Damage description*

Include specific locations on property (main building, garage, specific rooms, and foundation) to describe the damage.
