



NEWS RELEASE

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

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SUBJECT: DNR offers guidance in wake of regional flooding

MADISON, Wis. – With heavy rains in many Wisconsin counties this week, many property owners will spend the days ahead assessing damage, checking wells and septic systems and removing storm related debris.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources reminds residents that heavy rains can create conditions that affect private wells and drinking water. Following is a roundup of tips, resources and guidance in the aftermath of flooding.

Floodwaters

- People and pets are advised to limit contact and avoid swimming or wading in flood waters and runoff, which may contain bacteria and other contaminants.

Private wells and drinking water

- Floodwaters and runoff may affect private wells. Well owners who observe flooding or changes in their water should assume their wells are contaminated and should stop drinking the water. Homeowners are encouraged to make sure their wells are properly disinfected, then sample the well after pumping and disinfection to assure the water is safe.
- Wells located in pits, basements and low-lying areas are especially susceptible to contamination.
- Even without obvious signs of flooding, a well can become contaminated. More [recommendations for private well owners](#) whose wells have been inundated are available on the DNR website.
- More information on bacteriological contamination of drinking water wells, along with lists of licensed well drillers, pump installer and labs certified to analyze water samples are available by searching the DNR website, dnr.wi.gov, for the keyword "[wells](#)."

Visiting state parks and properties

- [Wildcat Mountain](#) and the [Kettle Moraine State Forest – Northern Unit](#) remain open to welcome visitors but have experience some flooding and trail damage.
- Current condition updates can be found by visiting DNR.wi.gov and searching "[Parks Conditions](#)."

Handling debris

- DNR has compiled information on how to dispose of specific materials and items. Visit [Cleaning up storm debris](#) for more information. You can also contact local authorities to find out if there are special arrangements or resources for cleaning up and disposing of storm and flood debris.

Septic systems

- Septic systems are regulated by the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services. Look for more information at DSPS.wi.gov, search “[private onsite wastewater treatment systems program](#).”

Additional information for those affected by the flooding can be found on DNR's website by searching "[Coping with Flooding](#)." The Wisconsin Department of Health Services also provides information and links to resources on its Flood Hazards and Recovery page: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/flood/ (exit DNR).