

E-BULLETIN | CWQA

CANADIAN WATER QUALITY ASSOCIATION

What to do in the event of a flood?

Water Treatment Equipment and Flooding

Alberta Health Services has alerted the public to the fact that the flood waters in Southern Alberta can carry pathogens, viruses, and bacteria. This is especially so if sewer backups has occurred within the building during the flood.

If you have a water treatment device such as a water softener or iron filter which has a direct connection to the building potable water supply that was **completely submerged** in the flood water:

- The water treatment device needs to be isolated from the water supply as soon as possible.
- For some older models of water softeners there may not be a bypass for the unit therefore it should be completely disconnected from the plumbing.

If the water treatment device was **not completely submerged**:

- The water treatment device needs to be sanitized in order to ensure the potable water in the building remains safe.

If you have a drinking water treatment device such as a Reverse Osmosis System or simple filtration system and live in a community that had a **boil water order in effect**:

- It is also recommend to sanitize any other water treatment equipment you have in the home at the same time.
- It is also recommended that you sanitize the home's plumbing with the approved disinfection procedures.
- Following sanitization, ensure that all plumbing outlets are checked for residual disinfection.
- It is also recommended to have your water tested by the local public health unit for pathogens.

For those who live in the country and your well was flooded there are some important steps you need to do to ensure the potable water in your home has not been contaminated.

Water treatment, pump and appliances equipment should be serviced as soon as possible if flood water has been run through it from the well. If the flooding into the well was significant, you may want to isolate any of the water treatment equipment.

Water softeners, filtration equipment and drinking water devices should be treated as any other appliance or fixture in your home and ***should be inspected by a qualified, trained water treatment technician*** if they came into contact with flood water.

Remember to have this inspection done before using the water treatment device. Water treatment devices that have been subject to flooding or other damage must not be reactivated or reconnected to the water supply until a person acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction, such as a plumber (for the general plumbing) or ***qualified, trained water treatment technician***, has inspected the systems. Floodwater can cause structural damage to the building. Therefore, all plumbing must be checked and pressure tested to ensure there are no leaks.

The inspection is best done during or after the flood water damage is repaired in the building. Ensure to ask the water treatment company you choose to provide you with information about the qualifications and expertise within their company in order to have safe water within your home.

"This is a matter of urgent safety to anyone with water treatment systems and the continued wellbeing of the public..." Aaron Biffert (CWQA President)