



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

For Immediate Release

(Pembroke, Ontario, 3:50 p.m. April 19, 2023)

Flood Water Safety

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry has issued a Flood Warning for [Pembroke District](#) and [Bancroft District](#); this includes Renfrew County, and the Township of South Algonquin. Rising water levels may pose a threat to the health and safety of residents.

Flood water and water ponding around wells can affect the safety of your drinking water. Renfrew County and District Health Unit is recommending that residents with water wells **in contact with flood water**:

1. boil their water for one minute at a rolling boil before drinking, food preparation or brushing teeth with the water,
2. use bottled water or,
3. use water from an alternate potable water source.

Well water should be tested for bacteria after flood waters recede. Water sample bottles can be picked up and dropped off at the Renfrew County and District Health Unit. For more locations, visit <https://www.rcdhu.com/healthy-living/safe-water/>.

During floods, the ground can become saturated, preventing proper operation of septic systems. If your septic system has been affected, avoid using the septic system if possible, or reduce the amount of water used by limiting toilet flushing, dishwashing, washing clothes, and showering.

Do not pump your septic system when the ground around it is still saturated. High ground water levels may cause an empty septic tank to float out of the ground and damage the inlet and outlet fittings.

Flood waters can be contaminated with sewage and cause illness. The following tips will help protect your family during flooding events:

- Keep your family safe by keeping family members and pets away from and out of the flood water.
- DO NOT enter areas where electrical systems have been affected by flood water, as there is a risk of electrocution. Always wait for clearance from an electrical authority before entering these areas.
- Building materials, clothing and furniture exposed to flood waters may be contaminated with sewage or other hazards and can support the growth of mould. Some items can be cleaned and disinfected; others may need to be thrown out.

Visit <https://www.rcdhu.com/healthy-living/emergency-preparedness/be-flood-ready/> for more information on what to do before and during flooding events.

Visit the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry: [Flood Forecasting and Warning Program \(gov.on.ca\)](http://www.gov.on.ca) daily to view your community flood risk.

For more information, visit <https://www.rcdhu.com/healthy-living/emergency-preparedness/>, call 1-800-276-1097 extension 505, or email environmentalhealth@rcdhu.com.