

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO DURING FLOOD?

For residents whose homes are flooded

INSTRUCTIONS TO REDUCE HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS



Electricity

Water and electricity combined can cause electrocution.

- Before water floods your home, cut the power while keeping your feet out of the water.
- If water has already infiltrated your home and the power is still on, contact Hydro-Québec (1-800-790-2424).
- Consult a master electrician before:
 - switching the power back on;
 - using any electrical devices that have come into contact with water.



Combustion appliances

Fuel-burning heaters, cooking devices, barbecues, camping gear, and non-electrical pumps and generators (oil, gas, etc.) release carbon monoxide which can cause severe or fatal intoxication.

- Never use these devices inside your home.
- Purchase battery-powered carbon monoxide detectors.
- If you notice any symptoms (e.g., headache, dizziness, fatigue, nausea) OR if the alarm rings:
 - Leave your home right away and dial 9-1-1.
 - Do not return home until firefighters or an expert have advised that it is safe.



Cold

There is a risk of hypothermia when you get wet or are exposed to cold elements.

- Stay dry and remain in a warm place; keep moving; eat and drink warm food and beverages.
- Consult medical services without delay if you are shivering uncontrollably, have difficulty speaking, experience fatigue or express abnormal behaviour.
- Pay particular attention to young children, seniors and individuals with physical or cognitive disabilities.



Medications

Not taking your medications can worsen your health condition and lead to complications.

- For people who take medications on a continuous, regular basis, make sure to have all the medications required.
- Throw out all medications that have come into contact with floodwater and renew or purchase new medications.
- Throw out any medications that could no longer be refrigerated as prescribed or consult your pharmacist to determine whether you can still take those medications.

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Food

Food which has been contaminated or remained unrefrigerated may cause food poisoning or gastroenteritis.

- Discard any food which has come into contact with floodwater; purchase other food.
- If there has been a power outage, consult the factsheet "*Quoi garder et quoi jeter*" and the « *Thermoguide* » from the ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec.



Floodwater and contaminated materials

Contact with floodwater or contaminated materials may cause skin infections or irritation.

- Avoid skin contact with floodwater or contaminated materials
- Wash any area that comes into contact with soap and clean water.



Drinking water

Your drinking water may have been contaminated with microbes or chemicals by the flood and might cause gastroenteritis.

If the source of your drinking is:

- A public water supply system:
 - Follow your municipality's or supplier's instructions.
- Your well:
 - **Consider your water unsafe for consumption until proven otherwise.**
 - If your water appears normal (color, smell, taste):
 - Boil it for at least 1 minute before using it for drinking, cooking, or brushing teeth.
 - If your water is murky or has an unusual smell:
 - Do not drink it, use bottled water instead.



Stress and anxiety

Any flood can cause a lot of stress and anxiety.

- Dial 8-1-1 to reach Info-Santé if you need help.



Evacuation

The risks in some situations are just too great to ignore. Authorities may have to order an evacuation and ask you to leave your home.

- Follow the instructions given to you by the police and firefighters.

As soon as your home is no longer flooded, consult "What Should You Do after a Flood?"