

Sept. 10, 2017

## FOOD SAFETY PREVENTIVE FOODBORNE ILLNESS



### Contact:

Noelda Lopez, Public Information Specialist

[Noelda.Lopez@flhealth.gov](mailto:Noelda.Lopez@flhealth.gov)

Office: 352-589-6424, After Hours: 352-728-7662

**Eustis FL** – The Florida Department of Health wants to remind everyone of ways to prevent Food Safety: Preventing Foodborne Illness in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma.

- People should not eat any food that may have come into contact with contaminated water from floods or tidal surges.
- Commercially prepared cans of food should not be eaten if there is a bulging or opening on the can or screw caps, soda bottle tops or twist-caps.
- Undamaged, commercially canned foods can be saved if labels are removed and cans are disinfected in a bleach solution. Use 1/4 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water; re-label the cans including expiration date and type of food. Assume that home-canned food is unsafe.
- Infants should preferably be breast fed or fed only pre-mixed canned baby formula. Do not use powdered formulas prepared with untreated water, use boiled water instead.
- When the power is out, refrigerators will keep foods cool for approximately 4 hours. Thawed and refrigerated foods should be thrown out after 4 hours.

### Sanitation and Hygiene: Preventing Waterborne Illness in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma

- Basic hygiene is very important during this emergency period. Always wash your hands with soap and water. Use only water that has been boiled or disinfected for washing hands before eating, after toilet use, after helping in cleanup activities and after handling items contaminated by floodwater or sewage.
- Flood water may contain fecal matter from sewage systems, agricultural and industrial waste and septic tanks. If you have open cuts or sores exposed to the floodwater, keep them as clean as possible by washing them with soap and disinfected or boiled water.
- Apply antibiotic cream to reduce the risk of infection. If a wound or sore develops redness, swelling or drainage, see a physician.
- Do not allow children to play in floodwater. They can be exposed to water contaminated with fecal matter.
- Do not allow children to play with toys that have been in floodwater until the toys have been disinfected. Use 1/4 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water to disinfect toys and other items.

### Power Outages: Preventing Fire Hazards

- Using battery-powered lanterns and flashlights is preferred.
- NEVER use candles.

### **Post Flood Clean-up**

- Clean up debris carefully to avoid injury and contamination.
- Chainsaws should only be operated in safe conditions (not in water soaked areas) and by people who are experienced in proper use.
- Lift heavy debris by bending knees and using legs to help lift.
- Wear shoes to avoid injury to the feet from glass, nails or other sharp objects.
- Avoid contact with downed power lines.
- Be alert to wildlife (snakes, alligators, etc.) that may have been displaced as a result of the flood or storm. If you see a snake or other wildlife, back away from it slowly and do not touch it. If the snake is in your home, immediately call the animal control agency in your county.

For more information, please contact your county health department or visit [www.floridahealth.gov](http://www.floridahealth.gov) or [www.FloridaDisaster.org](http://www.FloridaDisaster.org). Also, visit the following websites for other state and federal information on emergency and disaster planning: [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org), [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.FloridaHealth.gov](http://www.FloridaHealth.gov).