



# Health Bulletin

*Health tips and news for the community*

## Hurricane Safety: *Keeping Safe After a Flood*

Hurricane season is from June 1st to November 30th. Hurricane hazards come in many forms, including storm surge, heavy rainfall, inland flooding, high winds, tornadoes, and rip currents. Last year, our region had flooding after Hurricane Sandy.

Follow these tips to help you and your family stay safe during a flood and when cleaning up after the flood.

### Stay Out of the Water!

- **Do Not Drive or Walk into Floodwater!** It can be deeper than you think and you could get stuck.
- **Floodwater Moves Quickly!** It can sweep even good swimmers downstream.
- **Floodwater is NOT Clean!** You can get cut or hurt by debris floating in the water. There also might be small amounts of chemicals or sewage that could make you sick.



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**SUMMER 2013**

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- Heat Sickness
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**For more information about going back into your house safely after a flood, visit:**

[http://  
emergen-  
cy.CDC.gov/  
disasters/  
floods](http://emergency.CDC.gov/disasters/floods)

### STAY IN TOUCH WITH THE HEALTH BULLETIN

**Health Bulletin Archive:**

<http://www.phila.gov/Health/DiseaseControl/healthBulletin.html>

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## Stay Safe!

- **Keep the Health Information Card in your wallet or pocket.** The Health Information Card will help you keep track of important health information, medicines, emergency contact information, any special needs and any special supplies.
- To download the card, type the following Web address into your Internet browser: <http://www.phila.gov/health/pdfs/Web-Health%20InfoCard.pdf>
- **Wash Your Hands!** You can get sick if you eat, drink or smoke after touching the water or things that have been spoiled by the flood.
- **Protect Yourself!** Wear waterproof gloves, boots, and other protective clothing while cleaning. These clothes should be thrown away or washed after cleanup is completed each day.
- **Call your health care provider** if you get cut or hurt by something in the floodwater, ask about getting a tetanus shot.
- **Call your health care provider** if you or a family member has any of these symptoms:
  - **Fever over 100 degrees**
  - **Vomiting**
  - **Diarrhea**
  - **Severe stomach cramps**



## Stay Cool in the Heat

Heat sickness, such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke, are serious and can be life threatening. Older adults and people with health problems are at highest risk for heat sickness.

You can prevent heat sickness. If you have an older friend, neighbor, family member, or tenant, check in on them this summer! Make sure they are hydrated, cool and comfortable and remind them to:

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## Drink lots of fluids.

- Drink water throughout the day.
- Avoid caffeinated drinks like soda and tea as well as alcohol (these can dehydrate you).

## Stay cool outside.

- Avoid being outside during the hottest times of the day (10 a.m. - 2 p.m.).
- Try to rest in the shade and wear sunscreen, light clothing, hats and sunglasses to keep cool.

## Stay cool inside.

- Use a fan with the windows open or an air conditioner.
- Visit places like the library, shopping centers, movie theaters or senior centers that have air conditioning.



## Watch out for others.

- Check on your neighbors and people you know who have medical problems.
- Never leave seniors, children or pets alone in a car.

**For help when it is hot or to find a place to cool off, call the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging Heatline at 215-765-9040.**

Too much heat can cause **heat sickness**. Signs of heat sickness include:

- Extreme sweating
- Nausea (upset stomach)
- Feeling tired
- Lightheaded or dizzy
- Feeling very weak



If you are on medication for any reason, you may be at high risk for heat-related problems. Be sure to ask your doctor, and be careful to avoid situations where you might overheat.

**If you have any of these signs, get to a cool spot and drink something. Using a fan and putting wet towels on your skin may also help. If you start feeling worse, get medical help.**

## **Summer is Mosquito and Tick Season - Avoid Insect Bites to Avoid Infection**

Mosquito and tick bites can make you sick. These bugs can spread Diseases like **West Nile Virus** and **Lyme Disease**.



### **Quick Tips:**

- Stay inside at dawn and dusk, which is when mosquitoes are most active
- Keep mosquitoes outside by having well-fitting screens on both windows and doors
- Empty standing water, mow grass, and brush and leaf litter from around your house
- If you are out when mosquitoes are in areas with tall grass or woods:
  - ◊ Wear bug spray that has one of the following ingredients:
    - ⇒ **DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus** or **PMD**
  - ◊ Wear long sleeves and pants to cover your skin
  - ◊ Check for ticks and shower after being outdoors

**For more tips, visit: [www.phila.gov/health](http://www.phila.gov/health)**