



# State of Wisconsin Emergency Operations Center

For Immediate Release –6/8/2008

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## **Floodwaters Could Endanger Home and Farm Wells, Testing Necessary**

**MADISON** - Heavy rains in southern and southwestern Wisconsin on June 7 & 8 may have caused private wells to become contaminated with flood waters. Well owners should treat their wells prior to use if their well is known or even suspected of being overtopped by floodwaters. Well owners whose wells become flooded need to have the well tested before resuming use of the water. Floodwaters can contain bacteria and waste contaminants that threaten water supplies. Wells located in pits and basements are especially susceptible to such contamination.

**Any water supply system which has been overtopped by flood waters should be thoroughly disinfected and then tested to determine water safety.** This work is best performed by licensed well drillers or pump installers. Wells should be disinfected with a strong chlorine solution or chlorine tablets. The chlorine must come into direct contact with all interior surfaces of the well, from top to bottom and throughout the distribution plumbing. The solution should remain in the system for 24 hours and then flushed from the system. Then a water sample can be collected and submitted for bacteriological testing. Information about how to chlorinate your well is available from DNR customer service centers in Fitchburg, Dodgeville, Horicon, La Crosse, Eau Claire, Wisconsin Rapids and Wausau or the DNR website at <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/dwg/flood.htm>

Water sampling kits are available from the State Laboratory of Hygiene at 1-800-442-4618. County health departments may also have sample bottles.