FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 8/14/2018  
RE: Chemung County Health Department Provides Safety Tips During Flooding  
Contact: Jonathan Keough or Peter Buzzetti, Chemung County Health Department at 737-2019

“Chemung County Health Department Provides Safety Tips During Flooding”

ELMIRA - The Chemung County Health Department today issued information to area residents regarding private water supplies, private septic systems and contact with flood waters.

Residents with private wells are reminded that extreme wet weather increases risk that the water table will be contaminated with germs and parasites that can cause illness. Also, private septic systems cannot function properly when soils are saturated with rain, allowing contamination to be carried much further than normal. Do not allow children or animals to play near septic system discharge areas when soils are saturated. Use your septic system as little as possible until soaked soils can drain.

If you find evidence that your well was flooded you should consider the well contaminated and avoid using the water for drinking or bathing until you are able to flush and disinfect the well.

All private well owners should test their well for bacteria during and after very wet weather, and not just after extreme weather. Contact the health department for test labs in our area.

Residents are encouraged to refrain from entering flooded areas as only a few inches of water are necessary to knock a person down, potentially sweeping them away. In addition to the risk of drowning, the water may often be contaminated with pathogens, which could cause illness if ingested.

Please contact Environmental Health Services of the Chemung County Health Department at 737-2019 with questions or visit the Health Department’s website, www.chemungcountyhealth.org.

Link to DOH flooded well information: https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/6562/index.htm