

For immediate release

September 7, 2016

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Safety Tips and Health Concerns for Standing Water

Southwest Nebraska Public Health would like the public to remember these safety tips and health concerns in dealing with standing water. “We encourage area residents to take precautions as they deal with water issues from the storms,” shares Heidi Wheeler, Emergency Response Coordinator. These include:

- Remove standing water quickly.
- Discard wet, absorbent materials that can't be thoroughly cleaned and dried.
- Remove moisture by closing windows and running a dehumidifier or window air conditioner.
- Remember to wash your hands frequently with clean water or alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Disinfect toys that may have come into contact with storm waters.
- Clean up and prevent mold growth. Dry out the building as quickly as possible. Clean wet objects and surfaces with a bleach solution of 1 cup bleach per 5 gallons of water.
- If you receive a puncture wound or a wound contaminated with soil, sewer or storm water, treat the wound with soap and clean water and apply an antibiotic ointment. Contact your medical provider to find out if a tetanus shot is needed.
- Limit your contact with flood water.
- Avoid flood waters; water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline or raw sewage
- Clean and disinfect everything that got wet. Mud left from flood waters can contain sewage and chemicals.
- You should also keep children away from mud and make sure they don't play with anything that may have become polluted by flood water or sludge.

“Standing water can act as breeding sites for mosquitos,” explains Wheeler. “Walk around your home or business and look for stagnant water. Eliminate these areas as best as possible to avoid mosquito exposure.” The increase of mosquitos can increase your exposure to West Nile Virus. Preventing mosquito bites is the best way to prevent West Nile Virus.

SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th Street (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook. You can also follow us on Facebook.com/swnphd and Twitter@swpublichealth. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow counties.

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