

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR PEOPLE WHO MAY COME IN CONTACT WITH FLOODWATERS DURING JONES TRACT DE-WATERING AND RECOVERY EFFORTS

San Joaquin County Health Officer, Dr. Karen Furst, warns people working on de-watering and recovery efforts on Jones Tract or visiting the areas of flooding, that floodwaters may pose health and safety risks for those who come in contact with the water. Floodwater may contain pollutants or infectious agents that can cause health problems so it is best to avoid any contact with the water. Raw sewage, animal wastes, toxic substances, and chemical compounds may be in the water. Anyone who may have contact with the floodwaters should take the following precautions:

- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly, especially before eating.
- Gloves should be worn during work in flooded areas to protect against cuts and scrapes.
- If you have open cuts or sores, protect them from the water. Keep cuts and sores clean by washing with soap. If a wound develops redness, swelling or drainage, seek immediate medical attention.
- Tetanus (lock jaw) is a concern in floodwaters. Tetanus can be acquired through a wound during work or recreational activities in flooded areas. A tetanus booster is recommended for everyone every 10 years. Those working in or entering the flooded areas should confirm that their tetanus booster is up to date.
- If you swallow floodwater, you should see your physician because of the risk of Hepatitis A infection. Hepatitis A virus poses a threat if the floodwater is swallowed. Your physician will determine whether you should receive immune globulin to prevent infection.

- The general public should not enter the floodwaters due to the risk of infection and debris that may be under the water but not seen from the surface that could cause injury.
- Avoid eating any food that comes in contact with floodwater. If you suspect food that is not in a waterproof container may have come in contact with the water, discard it.

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