



Mississippi State Department of Health
570 East Woodrow Wilson - Box 1700 - Jackson, MS 39215-1700

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

October 29, 2020

Protect Your Health and Safety After a Hurricane

The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) reminds all Mississippians that there are precautions to take while cleaning up after Hurricane Zeta.

Prevent Illness from Food

Identify and throw away food that may not be safe to eat. Throw away food that may have come in contact with flood or storm water. Throw away canned foods that are bulging, opened, or damaged. Throw away food that has an unusual odor, color, or texture. Throw away perishable foods (including meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers) that have been above 40 degrees Fahrenheit (F) for 2 hours or more. If cans have come in contact with floodwater or storm water, remove the labels, wash the cans, and dip them in a solution of 1 cup of bleach in 5 gallons of water. Relabel the cans with a marker.

Prevent Illness from Water

Listen to and follow public announcements. Local authorities will tell you if tap water is safe to drink or to use for cooking or bathing. If the water is not safe to use, follow local instructions to use bottled water or to boil or disinfect water for cooking, cleaning, or bathing.

To correctly boil or disinfect water, hold water at a rolling boil for 1 minute to kill bacteria. If you can't boil water, add 1/8 teaspoon (about 0.75 mL) of newly purchased, unscented liquid household bleach per gallon of water. Stir the water well, and let it stand for 30 minutes before you use it. You can use water purifying tablets instead of boiling water or using bleach. For infants, use only canned baby formula. Do not use powdered formulas prepared with treated water. Clean children's toys that have come in contact with water. Use a solution of 1 cup of bleach in 5 gallons of water to clean the toys. Let toys air dry after cleaning.

Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that is produced by many types of equipment and is poisonous to breathe. Don't use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline- or charcoal-burning device inside your home, basement, or garage or near a window, door, or vent. Don't run a car or truck inside a garage attached to your house, even if you leave the door open. Don't heat your house with a gas oven. If your carbon monoxide detector sounds, leave your home immediately and call 911. Seek prompt medical attention if you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning or are feeling dizzy, light-headed, or nauseated.

Prevent Mold Growth

Clean up and dry out the building quickly (within 24 to 48 hours). Open doors and windows. Use fans to dry out the building. To prevent mold growth, clean wet items and surfaces with detergent and water. To remove mold growth, wear waterproof gloves, open windows and doors, and clean with a bleach solution of 1 cup of