

October 11, 2024

DOH-Martin Recommends Post Storm Safety Tips

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Martin County, Fla. — The Florida Department of Health in Martin County (DOH-Martin) urges residents to be aware of the health risks following Hurricane Milton.

DOH-Martin recommends the following tips to prevent illness or injury:

Flood Waters

- Basic hygiene is critical. If you are under a boil water notice, use commercially bottled water for mixing baby formula. Wash your hands with soap and either disinfected or boiled and cooled water, especially before preparing or eating food, after toilet use, after handling a soiled diaper, after participating in flood cleanup activities, and after handling objects contaminated with flood water or sewage.
- Avoid eating or drinking anything that has been contaminated with flood waters.
- Avoid contact with flood waters, especially if you have open cuts or sores.
- If you have any open cuts or sores and come in contact with flood waters, wash the area well with soap to prevent infection. If a wound develops redness, swelling, or drainage, seek immediate medical attention.
- Residents who sustain lacerations and/or puncture wounds are encouraged to contact their primary health care provider to make sure they are current on their tetanus vaccine and possibly get a booster.

Vibrio vulnificus

- **Risk Factors:** Individuals who have compromised immune systems, liver disease, or open wounds are at higher risk for [*Vibrio vulnificus*](#).
- **Symptoms:** Symptoms may include diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain, fever, chills, fast or high heart rate, confusion, or disorientation.
- **When to Seek Medical Attention:** Seek medical attention **immediately** if you experience symptoms associated with *Vibrio vulnificus*, especially after exposure to floodwaters.

Carbon Monoxide

- Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an invisible, odorless, and tasteless gas that can be deadly.

- Using generators indoors, including garages, can cause carbon monoxide to build up leading to death. Only use all gas-powered or charcoal burning equipment outside, at least 20 feet away from doors, windows, vents, and air intakes.
- Symptoms of CO poisoning include fatigue, weakness, shortness of breath, stomach pain, vomiting, headaches, confusion, lack of coordination, vision problems, loss of consciousness, chest pains for people with heart disease, and in some cases, death.
- If you suspect CO poisoning, call 911 or the Florida Poison Information Center at 1-800-222-1222.

Mosquito Bite Prevention

DRAIN standing water:

- Drain water from garbage cans, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flowerpots, or any other containers where sprinkler or rainwater has collected.
- Discard old tires, drums, bottles, cans, pots and pans, broken appliances, and other items that aren't being used.
- Empty and clean birdbaths and pets' water bowls at least twice a week.
- Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water.
- Maintain swimming pools in good condition and appropriately chlorinated. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

COVER your skin:

- If you must be outside when mosquitoes are active, cover up. Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and long sleeves.
- Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing. Always use repellents according to their labels. Repellents with 10-30% DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 tend to be most effective.
- Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

Boil Water Notice

- Once water reaches a boiling point, let it continue to boil for an additional minute.
- Boil tap water even if it is filtered.
- Use clean or bottled water to wash fruits and vegetables or to prepare drinks.
- Brush teeth with boiled or bottled water.

Wildlife

If you're bitten and **not in need** of immediate assistance:

- Wash hands with soap and clean, fresh water.
- Place pressure on the wound with a clean cloth to stop bleeding.
- After bleeding has stopped, pour bottled or clean, running water over the wound and gently clean water.

- Pat dry and use an adhesive bandage or dry, clean cloth to cover the wound.
- Once the wound has been stabilized, seek medical assistance to ensure that no additional treatment is needed.
- Report all bites to Martin County Animal Control to ensure rabies prevention follow-up is conducted.

Mold Clean Up

- **Take it out:** Anything that was wet with flood water and can't be cleaned and dried completely within 24 to 48 hours should be taken outside for waste removal.
- **Air out:** Open all doors and windows when you are removing wet or moldy materials, or when cleaning moldy surfaces.
- **Scrub surfaces:** Clean with water and detergent. Remove all mold you can see. Dry right away.
- **Don't cover it, remove it:** Painting or caulking over mold will not prevent mold from growing. Dry it out and remove all the mold before you paint or caulk.
- **Consider your medical status:** Individuals with suppressed or impaired immune systems, mold allergies, asthma, or other chronic lung disease should not clean or remove moldy materials.

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