

# FLOODS: HYGIENE & DISEASE CONTROL

## FACT SHEET

Short bouts of diarrhea and upset stomach and colds or other breathing diseases sometimes occur in developed countries, such as the United States, after a natural disaster. These outbreaks occur particularly among large groups of people in a shelter.

Basic hygiene measures like frequent hand washing or use of an alcohol hand gel can help prevent these diseases. However, after an emergency, finding clean running water can be difficult.

Always wash your hands with soap and *water that has been disinfected or bottled water*. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer should not be used in place of soap and water unless there is no clean water available.

### How to Use Hand Sanitizer

- Apply product to the palm of one hand
- Rub hands together vigorously—the friction is what helps to kill the germs
- Rub the product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until your hands dry



### When to Wash Your Hands

- Before preparing or eating food
- After going to the bathroom
- After changing a diaper
- Before and after caring for the sick
- After handling uncooked foods
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After handling an animal or its waste
- After handling garbage
- Before and after treating a wound
- After handling items contaminated by flood water or sewage

### How to Wash Your Hands Using Soap and Clean Water

- Place your hands under warm water
- Put soap in your hands and rub your hands together for at least 20 seconds
- Wash all surfaces, wrists, palms, fingers, under fingernails, and backs of hands
- Rinse the soap from your hands
- Dry your hands completely with a clean towel



**For more information, contact CCHD's Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program at 452-0881 x310 or visit [www.cchdmt.org](http://www.cchdmt.org) or [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).**