

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Virginia Department of Health Offers Free Testing for Private Wells
Impacted by Recent Flood**

Any Wells Submerged Due to Flooding are at Risk

SOUTHWEST Va. – The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is offering free test kits for individuals who have residential private drinking water wells impacted by the recent flooding in Southwest Virginia. Any well submerged during the recent flooding event is likely to be contaminated, even if there is no apparent damage.

The free private well test kits are available to residents in the counties of Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Floyd, Giles, Grayson, Lee, Montgomery, Pulaski, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise and Wythe, and the City of Radford. To qualify for testing, the well must first be disinfected and flushed. VDH recommends having a well driller assist with this process. For those choosing to disinfect the well themselves, all safety precautions and instructions should be followed using these instructions.

Once well users disinfect and flush their well, they can request a free test kit by calling the **VDH Call Center at 877-829-4682, Monday through Friday (no holidays) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.** or by completing the online survey. Test kits will also be available at the Hurricane Helene Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC). To find the closest DRC, please use the FEMA DRC locator.

Well water impacted by flooding can have germs that lead to gastrointestinal illness. The kits will include the tools necessary to collect samples for testing for total coliform and *E. coli*. Test results will only indicate if the well is contaminated.

Tests must be returned Monday through Thursday to the nearest Hurricane Helene Disaster Recovery Center or local health department location within the Cumberland Plateau, LENOWISCO, Mount Rogers, or New River health districts. Samples should be delivered to one of the available locations by 4 p.m. on the same day the sample is taken.

For more information about the free well testing program, visit VDH's Hurricane Helene Post-Storm Response webpage. For more information about specific concerns regarding private wells contact your local health department or a licensed well driller.

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