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DOH-LEE URGES RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO AVOID FLOOD WATERS

Contact:

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Fort Myers, Fla. – The Florida Department of Health in Lee County is encouraging residents and visitors to be mindful of standing water after Hurricane Elsa. Individuals should avoid swimming or wading in flood waters.

Here are some tips on how to protect yourself and your family:

Sanitation and Hygiene: Preventing Waterborne Illness

- Do not allow children to play in floodwater. They can be exposed to water contaminated with fecal matter and other waste.
- Do not allow children to play with toys that have been in floodwater until the toys have been disinfected. Use 1/4 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water to disinfect toys and other items.
- Basic hygiene is very important. Always wash your hands with soap and water. If you are under a boil water notice, use only water that has been boiled or disinfected for washing hands before eating, after toilet use, after helping in cleanup activities and after handling items exposed to floodwater or sewage.
- Flood water may contain fecal matter from sewage systems, agricultural and industrial waste and septic tanks. If you have open cuts or sores exposed to the floodwater, keep them as clean as possible by washing them with soap and disinfected or boiled water.
- If a wound or sore develops redness, swelling or drainage, see your health care provider.

Post Flood Clean-up

- Clean up debris carefully to avoid injury and contamination.
- Chainsaws should only be operated in safe conditions (not in water-soaked areas) and by people who are experienced in proper use.
- Lift heavy debris by bending knees and using legs to help lift.
- Wear shoes to avoid injury to the feet from glass, nails or other sharp objects.

- Avoid contact with downed power lines.
- Be alert to wildlife (snakes, alligators, etc.) that may have been displaced as a result of the flood or storm. If you see a snake or other wildlife, back away from it slowly and do not touch it. If the snake is in your home, immediately call your local animal control agency.

For more information, please contact the Florida Department of Health in Lee County, or visit lee.floridahealth.gov or www.floridadisaster.org. Also, visit the following websites for other state and federal information on emergency and disaster planning: www.redcross.org, www.ready.gov or www.fema.gov.