



News for Immediate Release

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Department of Health Offers Tips to Stay Safe in Sandy's Aftermath

Harrisburg – Hurricane Sandy has moved out of Pennsylvania, but some residents will be dealing with its effects for days, weeks or even longer. The Pennsylvania Department of Health is providing tips to help keep everyone safe and healthy while recovering from this historic storm.

“It has been very difficult for all of us to experience or witness the devastation that Hurricane Sandy brought to parts of Pennsylvania and surrounding areas,” said Acting Secretary Michael Wolf. “While preparing for Sandy was vital, it’s equally important to take steps now to keep yourself and your loved ones healthy after the storm.”

Wolf added that Pennsylvania has a wealth of resources available to help everyone in need, but that there are also many common sense approaches Pennsylvanians can take to help ensure their continued safety. He provided the following information and tips:

- Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning:
 - If your power is out, you may try to power your home by using generators or camp stoves, which can release carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that is released from many types of equipment, builds up in closed spaces, and is poisonous to breathe. Leave your home immediately and call 9-1-1 if your carbon monoxide detector sounds. Get medical help right away if you are dizzy, light headed or nauseous.
- Keep as warm as possible when your power is out:
 - Hypothermia is a serious condition that happens when your body temperature is too low. This usually happens in very cold weather, but can also happen when exposed to temperatures of 40 degrees or higher. Those most at risk include older Pennsylvanians and babies sleeping in cold rooms. If your power is out for a long time, stay with a relative or friend, or go to an emergency shelter.
- Prevent electrical injuries:
 - Hurricane Sandy left dangerous power lines on the ground when it moved through Pennsylvania. Never touch a fallen power line or drive through standing water if power lines are in the water. Electrical wires on the ground may be “live” and could hurt or kill you. Avoid contact with overhead power lines while cleaning up after the storm and call the power company to report any fallen power lines.
- Make sure food and water are safe:
 - Food - When in doubt, throw it out! If electricity in your home has been off for long periods of time, throw away foods that can spoil (like meat, poultry, fish, eggs, leftovers, etc.)

- Water - If your tap water is unsafe to drink, local authorities may issue "boil water advisories". Follow boil water advisories exactly to make sure tap water is safe before you drink or use it. If you cannot boil the water, use bottled water instead.
- Prevent unhealthy mold growth after flooding:
 - Clean up and dry out flooded buildings within 24 to 48 hours if possible. To prevent mold growth, clean wet items and surfaces with detergent and water. Everything that floodwater has touched should be disinfected with a solution of one cup of bleach in one gallon of water.

For more information about staying safe after Hurricane Sandy, visit www.health.state.pa.us and choose "Click Here for Hurricane Sandy Updates" at the top of the page. You can also visit www.pa.gov for more information and helpful resources.

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