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Subject: NEWS RELEASE: DHEC warns of floodwater dangers



SCEMD

Office of the Adjutant General

State Emergency Operations Center
2779 Fish Hatchery Road, West Columbia, SC 29172

Hurricane Matthew

NEWS RELEASE 23

For Immediate Release

State Joint Information Center

Phone: 803-737-8515 | Social: @SCEMD

DHEC warns of floodwater dangers

COLUMBIA, S.C. (Thursday, October 14) – Pee Dee area residents, particularly those in hard-hit counties such as Marion, Marlboro, Dillon and Florence, should not wade or play in floodwaters resulting from Hurricane Matthew.

“With rivers such as the Pee Dee, Little Pee Dee, Lumber, Lynches and Waccamaw near or at flood stages, residents are strongly warned to stay out of floodwaters to reduce the risk of infections and illness,” said Myra Reece, director of the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control’s Environmental Affairs. “Floodwaters can carry raw sewage and hazardous substances picked up as they flow across the land.” Floodwaters may contain potentially dangerous materials such as sewage, agricultural runoff, and chemicals from industrial areas. Stay safe by avoiding contact with floodwater.

Avoid contact with flood water due to potentially elevated levels of contamination associated with raw sewage and other hazardous or toxic substances that may be in the flood water. The Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Health and Human Services urge everyone in contact with flood waters to follow these guidelines:

- Avoid or limit direct contact with contaminated flood water.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap, especially before drinking and eating.
- Do not allow children to play in flood water, or play with toys contaminated with flood water.
- Report cuts or open wounds, and report all symptoms of illness. Keep vaccinations current.

Get more information on avoiding contact with flood waters from the EPA’s [website](#).

For health and safety tips visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [page](#).

Check out DHEC's hurricane and flood preparedness page [here](#).

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"South Carolina's emergency management program minimizes loss of life and property damage from all-hazard incidents."