

Private Drinking Water

Flood and Storm Water Concerns for Private Water Systems



When heavy precipitation, be it of extended duration or sudden torrential cloudburst, causes flooding, it is important to recognize that these unusual events can affect the quality of drinking water obtained from drilled wells, shallow wells and springs. Most at risk would include water sources that are in areas where flooding has occurred and is imminent, such as drilled wells located in well pits where groundwater tables have risen in the pit above the top of the well head, and shallow wells or springs located down gradient from open pollution sources such as agricultural or animal waste run-off or nearby septic systems. Other indicators of pollution may include water discoloration or unusual taste or odor to your private water supply.

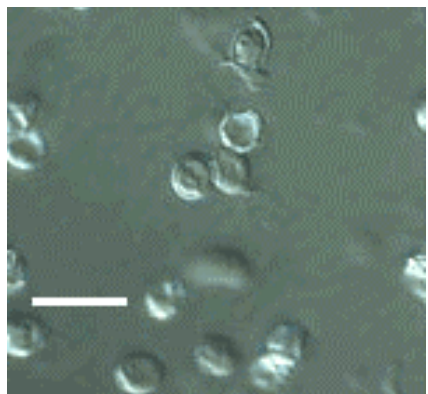
Homeowners are encouraged to frequently inspect their water sources prior to these storm events, and shortly thereafter, to determine if there may be conditions present that would make their private water sources vulnerable to pollution and possible contamination. If these conditions are present disinfection of the source followed by water sampling (both bacteriological & certain chemical parameters) is encouraged and you @860-509-7296 for additional advice if necessary. Any unusual aesthetic changes to the water (color, taste or odor) should also trigger precautionary measures such as the use of bottled water for drinking and cooking are recommended until water testing can determine if contamination is present in the water supply.

Table of Contents

Flood Recovery	3	Septic System & Well Flooding	6	Concrete Wall Moisture	9
Whatever You Do	10	Web Site of the Month	10	HUD & CPSC News	10
EPA-Clean Air Fine	11	EPA- New AC Coolant for Cars	13	EPA- 3 Recalls	14
Amazing Home Vidio Tour Web Site	21	CT Law Course Online	21	EPA Notice on Radiation from Japan	23
Membership	24	Contact Info	25		

The Environmental Health Section can recommend the appropriate types of water testing for your private water system during these events. Total coliform bacteria and E. coli bacteria are used as indicators of bacteriological contamination. The presence of E. coli bacteria indicates that the source of contamination has a fecal origin and there may be more harmful organisms present. If bacteriological contamination is present in the water supply after these storm events, you are encouraged to use bottled water for drinking, cooking, and other uses that may result in direct or indirect ingestion. Boiling the water rapidly for a minimum of one minute can also effectively disinfect water. Persons bathing or washing with water that has been contaminated with fecal matter may also experience an increased risk to health.

Therefore, do not use the water for any domestic use until it has been deemed potable for human consumption.



Any private well systems that provide water treatment including continuous disinfection (chlorine or ultraviolet light) of their water supply are encouraged to test the untreated water from the well suspected of being compromised by pollution from flooding or run-off. It may be appropriate to perform untreated water testing of each water source as a precautionary measure even if there are no obvious signs of concern. Keep in mind that flood waters entering a well can change the quality of the water and introduce sediment, organic matter and contamination that could overwhelm a treatment system and render it ineffective as a safeguard to bacterial contamination.

In addition to the wells themselves, buried water storage tanks or other water system components can also be vulnerable to contamination. Seek the advice of a professional well driller, water treatment specialist or your local health department in you are not confident about your private water system's integrity.

Typically after floodwaters have receded, wells and storage tanks that have been impacted should be thoroughly flushed, disinfected and tested to ensure that the water is of safe sanitary quality. See Publication **#27 Disinfection Procedure for Private Drinking Water Wells** for more information.

Private wells that are located in well pits with inadequate drainage should be considered automatically contaminated if flooded. After flooding the well should be upgraded with a pit less adapter to eliminate the pit and subsequent flooding. Other actions to improve your private water system may be suggested by a licensed well driller or plumber, your local health department or the EHS Private Well Program at 860-509-7926.

For more information please go to the following links:

EPA Office of Groundwater and Drinking Water

<http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/>

EPA New England

<http://www.epa.gov/region01/>

Flood Recovery - Restoring Water Wells

After flooding, private well owners should take actions to ensure their private water supply is safe for consumption. When a water supply well has been affected by flood waters, the water within the well may be contaminated with waterborne pathogens (germs) that can cause serious illness in humans and pets. If you believe that your well has been contaminated, discontinue using your well water for drinking and cooking purposes, and use only disinfected or bottled water.

This fact sheet provides guidance on how to address possible pathogen contamination. Drinking water wells can also be contaminated by fuel oil or other chemical products released during the flood (such as from home oil tanks and agricultural tanks). *If you believe your well may be contaminated by petroleum or other chemicals, do not use your well and immediately contact your local Health Department or the Department of Environmental Conservation Spill Hotline at 1-800-457-7362.*

There are five action steps needed to get a flooded well back into service safely:

Assessment... Repair... Flushing... Disinfection... Sampling.

Assessment

A flood will leave warning signs that a water well may be unsafe. Below are things that a well owner can look for, any one of these signs may indicate that a well is contaminated. Most private wells have the pump located inside the well casing and submerged, so well owners will probably not be able to inspect the pump. Well owners should contact a qualified professional, registered well driller or pump contractor, to evaluate and service well pumps.

1. Is the well located in or near the area that was flooded? If you did not see the area during the flood, debris and mud in the area and water or mud stains on the well can indicate that the well was flooded.
2. Is the ground surface around the well intact and stable? During flooding the ground around the well may erode, possibly creating unsafe conditions or a pathway for surface water and contaminants to enter the well.
3. Are there any electrical components or wires visible? Visible electrical wires may be dangerous and should be avoided due to electrical shock. If electrical connections or controls located outside the well casing remain submerged, turning on the pump may cause electrical shock or damage to the system. A qualified electrician should be contacted.
4. Is any damage to the well casing visible? A bent or cracked well casing may allow surface water, sediment and debris to enter the well and will increase the risk of contamination.
5. Is the well cap and seal securely fastened to the well casing? A loose well cap can allow sediment and debris to enter the well and contaminate it.

Repair

Do not turn on your well pump until the well has been assessed and repaired as needed. And do not drink or wash with well water until the well has been restored by proper disinfection and flushing. Here are some well restoration and repair tips:

General Cleaning - To avoid damage to the well, mud, silt and other debris should be removed from the well casing, cap, and other accessible components. Be sure electricity is off before you clean any electrical

components. If excessive mud, silt or sediment has entered the well, the pump may need to be removed before cleaning can take place.

Well Drainage - Regrade the ground around the well to direct all surface water away from the well casing. Surface water will contain contaminants that can readily migrate into the well if surface water is allowed to flow down along the well casing.

Well and Pump Inspection - Floodwater carries large debris that can dislodge parts of the well and distort or crack the well casing. Floodwater may also deposit a large amount of sediment in the well. If any of these conditions are observed you should have professionals repair your system.

Electrical System - If the pump's control box was submerged during the flood, its electrical components should be cleaned and dry before electrical service is restored. Do not attempt to clean electrical components without being 100% sure electricity is shut off. Consider hiring a qualified electrician to clean and inspect.

Pump Operation - If after cleaning and general repair, your well will not start or pump water, turn off the electricity and get assistance from a registered well driller or pump contractor.

Pumping the Well- After the well has been inspected and cleaned, the well should be pumped until the water runs clear to rid the well of floodwater. Use an outside spigot and a hose to direct the water to a nearby drainageway rather than into your septic system or public sewer (after flooding, both septic and public sewers may be overwhelmed and do not need more water). Depending on the size and depth of the well and extent of contamination, pumping times will vary... it may take thirty minutes, or it could be several hours or days.

Disinfection

Any water well that has been flooded should be disinfected before using it for washing, drinking or cooking. Even if your well is operational, you should disinfect your water until it is tested and found suitable for drinking. Changes in the water's appearance, taste or odor may indicate possible contamination.

DISINFECTING WATER FOR HOME USE: If your well was impacted by flooding, you can disinfect the water to make it safe for drinking and culinary purposes. Here are three different ways to do this:

Disinfection by Boiling: (NOTE: Disinfection by boiling produces the safest water)

- Bring water to a rolling boil, and keep a full boil for at least one minute.
- Let the water cool before drinking.
- Boiled water will taste better if you put oxygen back into it by pouring it back and forth between two containers. This will also improve the taste of stored water.

Using Liquid Chlorine Bleach

- Disinfect water by adding eight drops of liquid chlorine bleach (4-6% available chlorine) per gallon of water (up to sixteen drops if the water is cloudy)
- Stir, and let stand for 30 minutes.
- If the water does not taste and smell of chlorine at that point, add another dose of bleach and let stand for another 15 minutes.

Using Iodine or Chlorine Tablets

- Check the expiration date for the tablets before using.
- Follow the package directions.
- Usually one tablet is enough for one quart of water.
- Double the dose if the water is cloudy.

DISINFECTING A WELL: Here is a step by step method to sanitize a contaminated well before restoring it to full use:

1. Attach a hose to the outdoor faucet that is closest to the well or pressure tank. Run water through the hose until it is clear.
2. Mix two quarts household bleach containing about 5% chlorine in 10 gallons of water in a large bucket or pail in the area of the well casing.
3. Turn electrical power off to the well pump. Carefully remove the well cap and well seal if necessary. Set aside.
4. Place hose connected to outdoor faucet inside the well casing. Turn electrical power back on to the well pump and turn water on to run the pump.
5. Carefully pour the water and bleach mixture from the bucket or pail down the open well casing. At the same time, continue to run the water from the hose placed inside the well casing.
6. At each indoor and outdoor faucet, run the water until a chlorine odor is present, then shut each faucet off.
7. Continue running water through the hose, down inside the well casing to recirculate the chlorine treated water. Use the hose to also wash down the inside of the well casing.
8. After one hour of recirculating the water, shut all faucets off to stop the pump. Disconnect power supply to pump. Remove recirculator hose from well.
9. Mix two more quarts of bleach in 10 gallons of water and pour mixture down the well casing. Disinfect the well cap and seal by rinsing with a chlorine solution. Replace well seal and cap. Allow the well to stand idle for at least eight hours and preferably 12 to 24 hours. Avoid using the water during this time.
10. After the well has been idle for the recommended period of time, flush the chlorinated water out of the well. Turn the pump on and run the water using an outdoor faucet and garden hose in an area away from grass and shrubbery until the odor of chlorine disappears. Run all indoor and outdoor faucets until the odor and taste of chlorine disappears.

Sampling

11. After a contaminated well has been properly disinfected and the chlorine has been flushed out of the water system, the water should be tested to confirm that contamination has been removed. If chlorine odors persist, you may have to do additional flushing or wait several days before testing to be sure that all the chlorine has been flushed from the water system. Until testing shows that the water is free of contamination, you should continue to use bottled water or disinfect water for drinking and food preparation as described in the section **Disinfecting Water**.
12. You may wish to consider retesting the well water again after several weeks. If flooding and groundwater contamination is extensive, your well may be susceptible to recontamination for some time.
13. Additional information on sampling is available in the companion Fact Sheet "[Flood Recovery - Sampling Private Wells](#)". You can also contact your local Health Department for more information about testing your well. Contact information for the health office that serves your county can be found on the [DOH website](#).

Additional Protection Measures

14. There are some improvements you can take to protect your well from future damage.
15. **New Well.** If frequent flooding of your well occurs, consider drilling a new well where it is not subject to seasonal flooding. Make sure your well is constructed in such a manner that seasonal floodwater cannot enter the well. Contact a registered well driller for advice.
16. **Grading.** The ground surface immediately surrounding a well casing and, if possible, the property in general, should be graded to divert surface water away from the well. If erosion around the well has been a problem, consider armoring the area with vegetation or other erosion control measures
17. **Extend Casing.** Casing can be extended to a height above the expected or experienced level of the floodwater to protect against wellhead submersion.
18. **Well Cap.** Install a watertight and vermin proof well cap.

New York State Dept of Health Revised: July 2006

Flooding: Septic Systems, Wells

Septic Systems

A well-maintained and constructed septic system will better withstand the stresses of heavy rains or flooding.

Regular inspection is necessary to ensure proper functioning.

During heavy rains and floods, the ground can become saturated, preventing proper operation of the system. For example, a septic tank can collapse or float out of position.

Signs that a septic system is not working properly include the following:

- Sinks drain slowly
- Toilets drain slowly
- Floor drains overflow
- Sewage becomes visible outside the home

Before an Emergency

To prepare your septic system before an emergency such as a flood:

- Seal the manhole and or inspection ports to keep excess water out of the septic tank
- Be sure your septic tank is at least half full to prevent it from collapsing or floating
- If your septic system requires electricity,
 - o Turn off the pump at the circuit box before the area floods
 - o Waterproof all electrical connections to avoid electrical shock or damage to wiring, pumps, and the electrical system

During an Emergency

During an emergency such as a flood, hurricane, or earthquake, reduce the amount of water used by limiting toilet flushing, dishwashing, washing clothes, and showering.

Severe flooding can put drinking water wells at increased risk for contamination from flood water that may contain sewage. Avoid contact with any standing water that may contain sewage.

After an Emergency

CAUTION: Do not drink well water until you know it is safe. Use a safe water supply like bottled or treated water.

Be aware that flood water may contain sewage.

Precautions related to septic systems include:

- Avoid contact with any septic system electrical devices until they are dry and clean.
- Do not pump out the septic tank more than halfway or the tank may float out of the ground.
- Reduce all nonessential water use (for example, dishwashing, washing clothes, showering).
- Flush toilets as little as possible or use a temporary toilet.

If you suspect septic system damage, get the system professionally inspected and serviced. Contact your health department for a list of septic system contractors who work in your area.

Septic Systems: After the Flood

According to University of Minnesota Extension and the Onsite Sewage Treatment Program (OSTP) staff, if you have a septic system that is in the area affected by flooding, there is potential for damage to the system. However, you can take action after the flooding to minimize the damage. When floodwaters cover your septic system it should not be used. If the drainfield or ground above your septic tank floods, your individual sewage treatment system is not working.

If Your System Was Flooded

The OSTP staff recommends the following steps to help your system recover:

- Pump the tank(s) as soon as possible after the flood recedes and prior to resuming use of the system. Be sure to pump both the septic tank and the pump/lift station (if you have one). Silt and other debris may have collected in your septic tank while it was under water which could ultimately find its way to and damage the drainfield. Additionally, a variety of substances such as pesticides, petroleum products and other contaminants may have entered the tank. These contaminants could be detrimental to the beneficial bacteria in both the tank and the drainfield and therefore need to be removed. However, it is not advisable to leave the septic tank empty after pumping if the soil around the area of the tank(s) is saturated; this can cause the tank to “float” toward the ground’s surface if the soil’s water pressure remains high. If you have this concern, consult a licensed tank pumper/maintainer.
- Locate and protect the drainfield from compaction by keeping all traffic off the area. Often considerable traffic takes place around a flooded home as flood cleanup and home restoration occur. This traffic could include but not be limited to foot traffic, debris piles, dumpsters, and heavy equipment. Compaction reduces the capacity of your drainfield to treat wastewater and could lead to the early failure of your entire system.
- Check electrical connections for damage or wear before turning electricity back on.
- Check that the septic tank manhole cover is secure and that inspection ports have not been blocked or damaged. Check for animal damage or intrusion in the drainfield area.
- Check the vegetation over your septic tank and drainfield. Repair erosion damage; sod or reseed as necessary to provide a good plant cover. You may need to mulch the area to provide insulation if the grass has not become well established before winter.
- Inside your home, be sure to disinfect thoroughly if sewage backed up into the house or garage. Disease-causing organisms (pathogens) in wastewater can cause serious illness, such as dysentery, hepatitis, and other waterborne illnesses.

However, avoid flushing these disinfectants into drains which empty into the septic system. The disinfectants could be detrimental to the beneficial bacteria in both the tank and the drainfield. If you need to chlorinate your well, follow the

University of Minnesota instructions fully. Do not allow the bleach to enter your septic system.

- If after the floodwater has receded from the drainfield and the surrounding soil has had a chance to dry, but the drainfield still will not accept effluent from the septic tank, the drainfield pipes or soil might be “plugged”. At this time the homeowner should consult a licensed septic system professional.
- If homeowners have additional concerns they should discuss them with a local septic system permitting authority or a licensed septic system professional.
- If you have a drainfield that has not been flooded, but is soggy due to heavy rain, minimize water use within the home. The additional water added due to household use can cause poorly treated sewage to surface in your yard or raw sewage to back up into your house. You can minimize water use within the house in a variety of ways, including taking shorter showers or baths and not doing laundry until the drainfield begins to dry out.\\

Wells – What to Do Before the Flood

Wells and groundwater can be contaminated during flooding events due to the inflow of flood waters into the water well or aquifer. Flood water is often contaminated by livestock wastes, herbicide/pesticide residues, sewage (from the overflow of domestic septic systems) or other contaminants. While there are techniques which can be used to rehabilitate a well affected by surface flood water, there are steps which a well owner should follow before flooding to minimize any potential impacts. Here is a quick checklist for reducing the risk of flood water contamination of your water well:

1. Ensure that the land surrounding the well is sloped away so that surface water flows away rather than towards the well. This may involve extending the well casing above ground level. It is generally recommended that well casings extend at least 30 cm above ground
2. If possible, extend the well casing to above the anticipated flood level. A registered water well driller should be contacted to assist with this work.
3. You may also need to consider protecting the area over the water line between the well and the house with sand bags as a recent or improperly backfilled trench may provide a flow path for the flood water to the well casing.
4. You should ensure that the integrity of the surface seal outside the casing is maintained and in good shape. Check that there has been no settling of the soil or a cavity developed around the outside of the well casing where surface water is able to flow down. A local water well driller can provide information on commercial sources for fine bentonite chips which can be used to make an impervious seal around the well casing (some digging may be required to ensure the seal is installed to as deep as possible). Photo Credit: Ontario Ministry of

Environment

5. Well pits significantly increase the risk of well contamination as they provide a place for water and accompanying contaminants to collect. During flooding, well pits require special protective measures (e.g. cover with plywood and tarp, and secure with sandbags), but even then they would still pose a very high risk of water well contamination. To permit continued and safe use of an existing well located in a well pit, the well casing can be extended above ground level and a pitless adaptor added to allow distribution of the water. The pit can then be backfilled with low permeability backfill material (e.g. clay) that is mounded above the ground surface and around the extended well casing. A registered water well driller should be contacted to assist with this work. If insufficient time is available to carry out this work before the flood, it should be a priority after the flood.

6. Ensure the well has a tight fitting water proof cap. Most wells have caps with vent holes which are required for proper operation. If the well is not used for the duration of the flood event then these vent holes should be plugged. To further reduce risk (again, no guarantees), you can carefully wrap the cap and well casing with durable sheet plastic and duct tape to form as tight a seal as possible. Sand bags can be placed around the well to protect the well and plastic from debris.

When sealing the well cap and protecting the well, remember that any sealing material will need to be removable in order to allow future servicing of the well.

7. To reduce the risk of contamination, ensure that livestock wastes, fertilizers and pesticides are removed from the flood prone area and that household septic systems are pumped empty prior to the onset of flooding. Caution is required when emptying fiberglass or plastic septic tanks that are not anchored. They should be refilled with clean water to prevent floating under high water table conditions. You should also consult other flood preparedness tip sheets for other measures you should take on your farm “before the flood”.

8. Raise or remove any non-submersible mechanical or electrical equipment that is installed in a pit as it may be at risk from surface flooding or a rising water table. Turn the electricity off to your well pump just prior to the flood.

9. Ensure that any stand-by or abandoned (unused) wells in the area are also protected. Any abandoned well is an environmental liability and should be permanently sealed to ensure it will not act as a point source of groundwater pollution now or in the future. Flood waters entering an abandoned well can contaminate your active well and the aquifer that you and your neighbors draw water from. Again, if not enough time to do this now, it should be a priority “after the flood”. Plugging of abandoned wells must be done by a registered well driller.

10. Ensure that backflow prevention valves are in place on all hydrants or outside taps. If the well is community well, the well should be assessed for risk of contamination or damage from flooding and upgraded before the flooding event if possible. There is no guarantee that, even if you follow this checklist, you will not have problems with your well water quality after the flood. It is important that you disinfect your water well after the flood, and then pump your well, and sample and test the well water (at least for total coliform bacteria) before using it for domestic water supply. Boil your drinking water until you are sure it is safe for consumption.

Concrete Wall Moisture

By: PHILLIP GAPP at: Assurance HI

Many variable effect moisture meter readings in poured concrete basement or foundation walls. Any metal in the concrete will cause false positives. Move the moisture meter at least 24" horizontal or vertically 90 degrees away from any area you suspect may be giving you an unusual reading.

- Even the best of meters will not penetrate an 8", 10", or 12" concrete pour.
- Check with the manufacture for the depth limit your meter is capable of reading.
- Some contact meter have a concrete scale. Be sure your meter is not set to drywall when you want to be reading concrete.

If you suspect the wall is wet, do a visual inspection of the grade and downspout runoff on the exterior of the wall in question. Many times the wall does not need to be water proofed but does need the downspout extended or a trough dug to channel surface drainage.

As in any measuring devise, consider readings as relatively a "good indication of water" present. Limit your liability by not making an absolute number call or making a definitive statement using a specific number. You

may want to report that "the moisture meter read a water content between 14 -- 17%. The manufacturer states that 15 -- 21% is considered wet."

Whatever you do

Do not fail to recommend if your client is on a private well water system, to have at the least a basic potability well water analysis for their safety & health.

Web site of the month: TW Pumps

- Tired of low water pressure?
- Want to take a great shower?
- Fed up with your noisy pump

"Our Water Booster Pumps will make everything in your home or business work better, guaranteed"

Ned Towle, President, Towle Whitney LLC

<http://towle-whitney.com/atb>



NEWS from CPSC and HUD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 18, 2011
Release #11-176

CPSC Hotline: (800) 638-2772
CPSC Media Contact: (301) 504-7908
HUD Media Contact: (202) 708-0685

CPSC and HUD Issue Updated Remediation Protocol for Homes with Problem Drywall

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) are issuing an updated [remediation protocol](#) (pdf) for homes with problem drywall. A [study](#) (pdf) conducted on behalf of CPSC by Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico, finds no evidence of a safety hazard to home electrical systems. Sandia simulated long-term exposure of wiring and other electrical components to hydrogen sulfide gas, which is associated with problem drywall.

Based on this study, CPSC and HUD staff, representing the Interagency Task Force on Problem Drywall, are no longer recommending the removal of all electrical wiring in homes with problem drywall. This change in the government's protocol may reduce the cost of remediation for many homes.

After simulating more than 40 years of corrosive conditions that could exist in problem drywall homes, Sandia staff did not observe any acute or long-term electrical safety events, such as smoking or fire. Corrosion and blackening of the exposed electrical components did occur and was observed to be consistent with the characteristic corrosion reported to CPSC by thousands of consumers. Based on this study, it is the belief of the staffs of CPSC, HUD and Sandia that long-term exposure of wiring and other electrical components to hydrogen sulfide gases does not indicate a safety hazard to a home's electrical systems.

With these changes, the remediation guidance for homes with problem drywall calls for the replacement of all:

- problem drywall;
- fire safety alarm devices, including smoke and carbon monoxide alarms;
- electrical distribution components, including receptacles, switches and circuit breakers; and
- gas service piping and fire suppression sprinkler systems.

CPSC and HUD staffs are also issuing an updated [identification guidance](#) (pdf), which broadens the range of installation years of affected homes to include homes where drywall was installed as late as 2009. Importantly, the drywall installed in 2009 had been previously imported during the years 2006-2007 and does not represent any new importation of problem drywall.

The staffs of CPSC and HUD believe that following the updated [identification and remediation protocols](#) (pdf) will enable homeowners to correctly identify homes containing problem drywall and comprehensively remediate those homes to address any potential health and safety issues associated with the problem drywall.

CPSC is in the final stages of completing its scientific investigation into problem drywall. For additional findings from the Interagency Drywall Task Force's investigation, visit www.DrywallResponse.gov

News Release



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

New England Regional Office March 17, 2011

Contact: David Deegan, (617) 918-1017

Chemical Distributor Agrees to Pay \$164,000 for Violations of Clean Air and Right to Know Laws

(Boston, Mass. – Mar. 17, 2011) – A company that blends commercial alcohols and stores chemicals for sale and distribution in Brookfield, Conn., has agreed to pay \$164,109 to settle claims it violated federal Clean Air Act requirements meant to prevent chemical releases as well as federal community right-to-know laws.

According to a complaint filed by the U.S. EPA, Pharmco Products failed to submit to EPA a risk management plan, known as an RMP, for its sporadic storage of pentane in violation of the Clean Air Act. In addition, Pharmco failed to alert emergency responders of the presence of more than two dozen chemicals and file Toxic Release Inventory reports for four chemicals, in violation of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act.

The discovery of violations at Pharmco and a few other chemical warehouses in New England has led to a broader effort to inspect and ensure compliance at warehouses storing chemicals. Pharmco is one of several chemical warehouses or distribution companies in New England that have been found violating environmental law, and more enforcement actions are expected.

Pharmco was cooperative at all stages of EPA's investigation and enforcement. To address the violations, Pharmco has come into compliance and has put into place a sophisticated inventory management system that should help prevent Pharmco from exceeding the regulatory thresholds of chemicals that are subject to the RMP regulations. The improved inventory system should also help the company accurately report its chemicals to emergency responders and the public, in compliance with the federal right-to-know law.

“The need for better inventory management has been one of the key lessons learned from EPA's chemical warehouse inspections,” said Curt Spalding, regional administrator of EPA's New England office. “Chemical inventories can shift on almost a daily basis at these facilities. Accurate inventory tracking is crucial for compliance.”

By inspecting chemical warehouses across New England, EPA New England learned that there are several areas where improvement is needed almost across the board. Although the Pharmco facility seemed relatively safe, the lack of reporting was not safe, and there have been real safety deficits at other warehouses EPA New England inspected.

Other lessons learned include the following (many of which are not applicable to Pharmco's facility):

- It is important to ensure the adequate separation of incompatible materials – specifically those chemicals that if co-located could create a danger of fire, explosion, or generate toxic gases;
- It is important to ensure that the buildings are structurally appropriate for flammable chemical storage and that they are equipped with the proper fire protections (an insurance company audits Pharmco on a regular basis to ensure that the company complies with good loss-prevention practices, which helps promote safety);
- Companies should not assume that the list of chemicals covered by OSHA's Process Safety Management regulations is identical to the list of chemicals covered by EPA's RMP regulations;

- Often, companies violating the Clean Air Act were also found to be violating EPCRA and/or hazardous waste regulations;
- Companies should ensure that secondary containment systems for chemicals (to contain spills or leaks) are in good repair, that drums are stored in a stable manner, that storage tanks and containers are sound, and that there is adequate aisle space for emergency responders;
- Several companies were unaware that the Clean Air Act's General Duty Clause can apply even when RMP regulations do not (for example, when an RMP chemical is present in an amount that does not trigger the RMP regulations or when flammable chemicals are present that are not on the list of RMP chemicals). The General Duty Clause requires companies that manage extremely hazardous substances to prevent accidental releases by, among other things, designing and maintaining a safe facility.
- Companies storing and distributing large quantities of chemicals must ensure that they have excellent coordination with local emergency responders.

More information:

- Clean Air Act Section 112(r) RMP regulations (www.epa.gov/emergencies/content/rmp/index.htm)
- Clean Air Act Section 112(r) General Duty Clause (www.epa.gov/compliance/resources/policies/civil/caa/gdc)
- EPCRA requirements (www.epa.gov/emergencies/content/epcra/index.htm) and (www.epa.gov/tri)



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 28, 2011

EPA Approves New Coolant for Car Air Conditioning Systems

Better climate protection without harming the ozone layer

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued final approval for a new refrigerant for use in motor vehicle air conditioning systems that does not deplete the ozone layer, which helps protect the environment and people's health. The new chemical, HFO-1234yf, may now be used in air

conditioning for new cars and light trucks. When used appropriately, this chemical can reduce the environmental impact of motor vehicle air conditioners and has a global warming potential that is 99.7 percent less than the current chemical (HFC-134a) used in most car air conditioners.

"This new chemical helps fight climate change and ozone depletion," said Gina McCarthy, assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. "It is homegrown innovative solutions like this that save lives and strengthen our economy."

EPA assists in the transition to green technologies by identifying alternatives that are better for people's health and the environment. EPA's recent standards for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from light-duty motor vehicles provide an opportunity for automakers to receive credit for adopting a chemical with less climate impact as a cost-effective way to meet the new standards. Using HFO-1234yf is one option available to automakers.

Prior to HFC-134a, car air conditioners generally used CFC-12, a potent greenhouse gas and ozone-depleting substance. Depleting the stratospheric ozone layer leads to higher levels of ultraviolet (UV) radiation reaching the Earth's surface. UV radiation has several harmful effects, including skin cancer, cataracts, immune system suppression, and premature aging and wrinkling of the skin. For these reasons, it is important to check the UV Index and remember sun safety: wear hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen.

More information:

<http://www.epa.gov/ozone/snap/>

<http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html>



NEWS from CPSC

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Office of Information and Public Affairs

Washington, DC 20207

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 3, 2011

Release #11-153

Firm's Recall Hotline: (877) 337-2653

CPSC Recall Hotline: (800) 638-2772

CPSC Media Contact: (301) 504-7908

Liebherr Recalls Built-In Refrigerators Due to Injury Hazard; Door Can Detach

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with the firm named below, today announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. It is illegal to resell or attempt to resell a recalled consumer product.

Name of Product: Liebherr Built-In 30-Inch Wide Bottom Freezer Refrigerators

Units: About 5,702 units

Importer: Liebherr-Canada Ltd of Ontario, of Canada

Manufacturer: Liebherr-Hausgeraete Lienz GmbH, of Austria

Hazard: The refrigerator's door can detach, posing an injury hazard to consumers.

Incidents/Injuries: Liebherr has received ten reports of doors detaching. No injuries reported.

Description: This recall involves Liebherr built-in 30-inch wide bottom freezer refrigerators with model and index numbers listed below. The refrigerators were sold individually or as side-by-side companion units. The refrigerators come in stainless steel and various custom finishes and are built into the kitchen cabinetry. "Liebherr" is written on the top interior control panel. The model number can be found on a label located behind the bottom drawer on the left interior side of the single door refrigerator.

Model Number	Index Number
C 1600	16 / 137 16A / 137
C 1601	15 / 237 15A / 237 15B / 237 15F / 237 15G / 237 16 / 237 16A / 237
CI 1600	15G / 137 16 / 137 16A / 137
CI 1601	15 / 237 15A / 237 15B / 237 15F / 237 15G / 237 16 / 237 16A / 237
C 1650	15 / 137 15A / 137 15B / 137 15C / 137

	15D / 137 15H / 137 15I / 137 16 / 137 16A / 137 16B / 137
C 1651	15A / 237 15B / 237 15C / 237 15D / 237 15H / 237 15I / 237 16 / 237 16A / 237 16B / 237
CI 1650	15 / 137 15A / 137 15B / 137 15C / 137 15D / 137 15H / 137 15I / 137 16 / 137 16A / 137 16B / 137

CI 1651	15A / 237 15B / 237 15C / 237 15D / 237 15H / 237 15I / 237 16 / 237 16A / 237 16B / 237
CI 1700	14A / 137

Sold by: Appliance and specialty retailers nationwide from February 2004 through January 2011 for between \$4,400 and \$5,000.

Manufactured in: Austria

Remedy: Consumers with recalled refrigerators should contact Liebherr immediately to schedule a free in-home repair. Consumers should check their refrigerator immediately to see whether the door hinge pin has become loose as indicated by a popped up hinge pin at the top or bottom. If the hinge has not become loose and the door is functioning properly, consumers may continue to use the refrigerator until it is repaired.

Consumer Contact: For additional information, contact Liebherr toll-free at (877) 337-2653 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. MT or visit Liebherr's website at www.liebherr.us



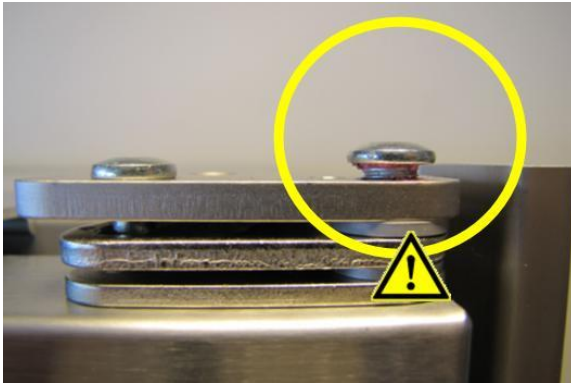
Individual Unit



Individual Unit in Side-By-Side Installation

Inspection of door hinge pin
(for C 1601, C 1600, C 1650, C 1651, CI 1601, CI 1600, CI 1650, CI 1651 and CI 1700)

Check top and bottom hinges

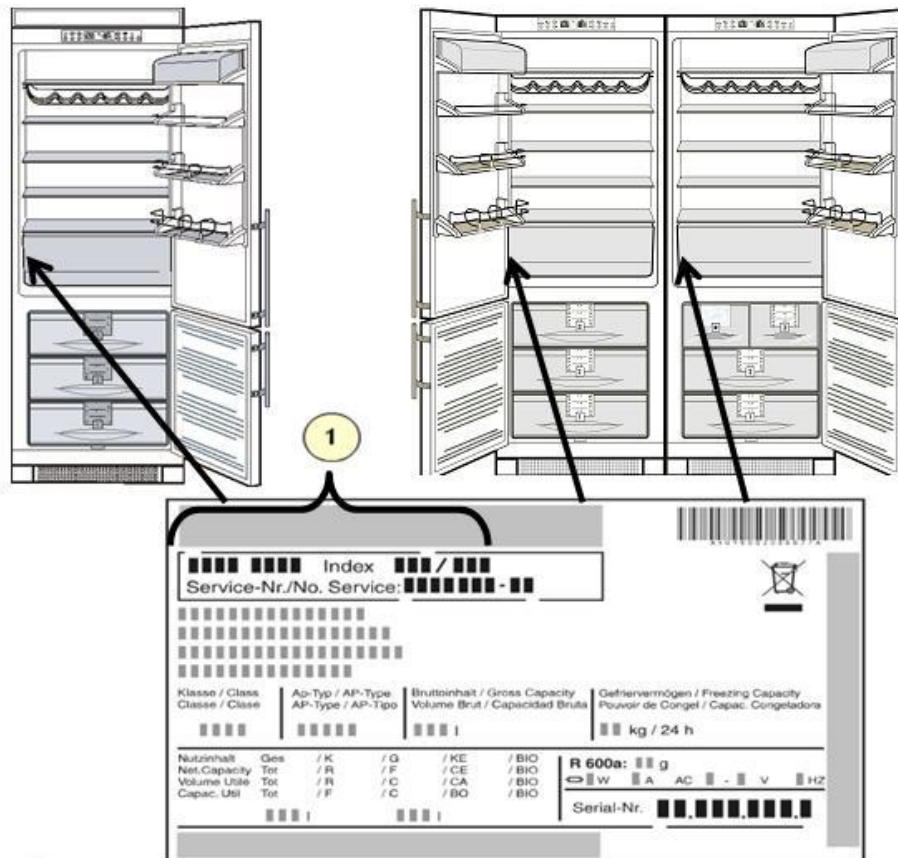


Door Hinge Pin Popped Up



OK

Location of the Model and Index Number



1 Model and Index Number

CPSC is still interested in receiving incident or injury reports that are either directly related to this product recall or involve a different hazard with the same product. Please tell us about it by visiting www.saferproducts.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 10, 2011
Release #11-164

Firm's Recall Hotline: (877) 858-4959
CPSC Recall Hotline: (800) 638-2772
CPSC Media Contact: (301) 504-7908

Wall Mount Fireplaces Recalled by Southern Enterprises Due to Fire and Fall Hazards; Sold Exclusively by Home Shopping Network

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with the firm named below, today announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. It is illegal to resell or attempt to resell a recalled consumer product.

Name of Product: Colin Cowie Gel-Fuel Wood Fireplaces
Units: About 6,000
Importer: Southern Enterprises Inc. (SEI), of Coppell, Texas

Hazard: Heat from the operating unit causes the plastic mounting screws to deform causing the unit to fall from the wall, posing a fall and fire hazard.

Incidents/Injuries: SEI has received reports of 21 incidents of the product detaching from wall and falling, heat damage, and/or fire. Two reports of personal injuries, including a knee injury and broken toes.

Description: This recall involves Colin Cowie dual-positioning, wood wall-mount, gel-fuel fireplace with item No. 955-074. The wooden wall mount fireplace has an espresso-colored finish with copper, silver or antique gold finished metal trim. It may be hung in a horizontal or vertical position. This recall involves units manufactured in July 2010. Lot number SEI/07/001 can be found on a label on the rear of the unit in the upper right hand corner when horizontal.

Sold at: Home Shopping Network between October and November 2010 for about \$250.

Manufactured in: China

Remedy: Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled product and call SEI for a corrective retro fit kit that will be sent free of charge.

Consumer Contact: For additional information, contact SEI at (877) 858-4959 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. CT Monday through Friday or visit the firm's website at www.seidal.com/retrofit



CPSC is still interested in receiving incident or injury reports that are either directly related to this product recall or involve a different hazard with the same product. Please tell us about it by visiting www.saferproducts.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 8, 2011
Release #11-157

Firm's Recall Hotline: (877) 343-5651
CPSC Recall Hotline: (800) 638-2772
CPSC Media Contact: (301) 504-7908
HC Media Contact: (613) 957-2983

Sunjoy Industries Recalls Outdoor Wood Burning Fireplaces Sold Exclusively at Lowe's Stores Due to Fire Hazard

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and Health Canada, in cooperation with the firm named below, today announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. It is illegal to resell or attempt to resell a recalled consumer product.

Name of Product: Freestanding Steel Outdoor Fireplaces
Units: About 20,000 in the United States and 400 in Canada
Manufacturer: Sunjoy Industries Group Limited, of Steubenville, Ohio

Hazard: The decorative bronze powder coat finish on the fireplace chimney can ignite during use, posing a fire hazard to consumers.

Incidents/Injuries: Sunjoy has received 14 reports of the chimney's decorative powder coat finish catching fire, resulting in one report of melted siding. No injuries have been reported.

Description: This recall involves "Garden Treasures Living" steel outdoor fireplaces with a bronze finish chimney and slate colored accents. The wood burning fireplace is approximately 24 inches deep by 35 inches wide and 57 inches tall, has two glass doors and a tile back inside. Item number 0027705 and model number L-OF082PST-3 are printed on the front page of the product's instruction manual. No other "Garden Treasures Living" brand outdoor fireplaces are included in this recall.

Sold at: Lowe's retail stores nationwide from March 2010 through November 2010 for about \$300.

Manufactured in: China

Remedy: Consumers should immediately stop using the fireplace and contact Sunjoy to obtain a free replacement chimney and chimney cap.

Consumer Contact: For additional information, contact Sunjoy toll-free at (877) 343-5651 between 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday, or visit the firm's website at www.sunjoydirect.com/fireplacerecall.htm. Consumers can also email the firm at fireplacerecall@sunjoydirect.com

Note: Health Canada's press release is available at http://cpsr-rspc.hc-sc.gc.ca/PR-RP/recall-retrait-eng.jsp?re_id=1289



CPSC is still interested in receiving incident or injury reports that are either directly related to this product recall or involve a different hazard with the same product. Please tell us about it by visiting www.saferproducts.gov

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http://www.builderconcepthome2011.com/videos.php?video_id=12

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CONTACT:

EPA Press Office press@epa.gov FDA Press Office fdaopa@fda.hhs.gov **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** March 30, 2011

JOINT EPA/FDA STATEMENT: Update on Ongoing Monitoring

WASHINGTON – In response to the ongoing situation in Japan, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has taken steps to increase the level of nationwide monitoring of milk, precipitation, drinking water, and other potential exposure routes.

EPA conducts radiological monitoring of milk under its RADNET program, while the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has jurisdiction over the safety, labeling and identity of milk and milk products in interstate commerce. States have jurisdiction over those facilities located within their territory.

Results from a screening sample taken March 25 from Spokane, Wash. detected 0.8 pCi/L of iodine-131, which is more than 5,000 times lower than the Derived Intervention Level set by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. These types of findings are to be expected in the coming days and are far below levels of public health concern, including for infants and children.. Iodine-131 has a very short half-life of approximately eight days, and the level detected in milk and milk products is therefore expected to drop relatively quickly.

“Radiation is all around us in our daily lives, and these findings are a minuscule amount compared to what people experience every day. For example, a person would be exposed to low levels of radiation on a round trip cross country flight, watching television, and even from construction materials,” said Patricia Hansen, an FDA senior scientist.

EPA’s recommendation to state and local governments is to continue to coordinate closely with EPA, FDA and CDC. EPA will continue to communicate our nationwide sampling results as they come in.

EPA: <http://www.epa.gov/japan2011>

FDA: <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/PublicHealthFocus/ucm247403.htm>

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