

Guidance for hot tubs in private, rental and vacation homes

Due to Hurricane Helene, your hot tub may have been flooded, damaged or not received regular maintenance and cleaning, which could lead to build up of harmful bacteria including the bacteria that causes Legionnaire's disease. The following information can protect you and your family as you use hot tubs this fall, either in your home or in a vacation or rental home.

For hot tub owners:

- **Drain Hot Tub:** If the hot tub did not receive regular cleaning during the storm or was damaged or flooded, drain the water from the hot tub.
- **Scrub and Rinse:** Using fresh potable water, scrub, clean and rinse all surfaces of the hot tub as needed.
- **Service filters:** Follow the manufacturer's instructions to replace and clean filters as needed.
- **Refill:** Refill the hot tub with fresh, potable water. Water that is under a boil water notice should not be used for refilling a hot tub.
- **Resume Use:** Return the hot tub to routine disinfectant levels and begin using again. The routine disinfectant levels for a hot tub are free chlorine 3-10 ppm, bromine 4-8 ppm and water pH of 7.2-7.8.

If a regular source of fresh potable water is not available for servicing and refilling your hot tub, wait to resume use until a reliable water source is available. Water from a municipal supply operating under a boil water notice is not considered a reliable water source for a hot tub. Water with high turbidity (meaning not very clear) is difficult to keep at proper disinfection levels and can cause buildup of biofilms on jets and other areas of the hot tub that allow for growth of bacteria.

For renters or vacation home guests:

If you are at increased risk of becoming sick from hot tub exposure, consider avoiding use of hot tubs. People at increased risk of getting sick include:

- People 50 years of age or older
- Current or former smokers
- People with chronic health conditions like cancer, lung disease, diabetes, kidney failure or liver failure
- People with weakened immune systems

Do not use the hot tub if you see any signs of buildup on jets or the filter, or any other signs that the hot tub is not being maintained or cleaned regularly.

Ask the rental company or vacation homeowner to verify with records that the hot tub has been maintained, cleaned and disinfected following appropriate guidance.

If you are staying at a location that is under a boil water notice, consider skipping use of the hot tub unless you know the source of the water used to fill the hot tub.

For more information, contact your local health department www.dph.ncdhhs.gov/contact/LHD

Resources:

- [CDC Controlling Legionella In Hot Tubs](#)
- [CDC What You Can Do to Stay Healthy in Hot Tubs](#)
- [NC Legionnaires Disease Prevention After Hurricane Helene](#)

