



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mobilising the Mud Army Safely

Keeping flood recovery efforts safe for everyone involved

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President of Environmental Health Australia (Queensland) Inc. Wendy Gambly, has the following important message for all persons involved in the cleanup after the floods in south-east Queensland.

“The hazards in flood waters are likely variable and can include sewage, chemicals (household and industrial), cleaning solutions, petroleum products and pesticides. Not only are the hazards in the water alone, but there are also physical hazards such as storm debris, ground erosion and displaced animals.”

Anyone involved with flood clean-up should use appropriate PPE and clothing to avoid direct skin contact with flood waters. Appropriate PPE can include:

- Watertight boots (Sneakers and thongs are not appropriate they will transfer contamination and will not prevent punctures)
- Heavy, waterproof, cut-resistant work gloves; other types of protective gloves may be required if handling identified material hazards
- Comfortable, light weight clothing including long pants and a long-sleeved shirt
- All cuts and abrasions must be protected with waterproof gloves and dressings
- The use of insect repellent, sun block and lip balm may also be required if you are working outside in the sun.

Additional PPE, respiratory protection, or clothing may be required when specific exposure hazards are identified or expected at the clean-up site. In some instances, the protective equipment (garment, boots and gloves) may need to be impervious to contaminated flood or other site-specific chemical, physical, or biological hazards.

“In all instances, make sure you wash your hands with soap and clean water, especially before eating or drinking. Alcohol-based hand sanitisers can be used if soap and water is not available,” said Ms Gambley.

“If in doubt regarding special hazards such as possible asbestos or chemicals, please consult a professional waste collection company or person or your local Environmental Health Officer (EHO).”

“Queenslanders are resilient and always there to lend a hand. Let’s make sure we do it safely.”

Environmental Health Australia is committed to the enhancement of environmental health standards and services to the community through advocacy, promotion, education and leadership.

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