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Subject: RELEASE FROM THE WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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*** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ***

Advisory From the Wyoming Department of Health on Health Safety in Flood Conditions

CHEYENNE - State Health Officer, Dr. Brent Sherard, this afternoon said that current flood conditions existing in the state are a concern and are being very closely monitored by public health officials for any emerging public health threat.

In light of the heavy rain and snowfall in North-Central Wyoming, the following is a health advisory from Wyoming Department of Health officials on health safety in case of flood:

How to Avoid Illness -

Always wash your hands with soap and water that has been boiled or disinfected before preparing or eating food, after toilet use, after participating in flood cleanup activities, and after handling articles contaminated with flood water or sewage.

How to Make Sure Your Food is Safe -

Do not eat any food that may have come into contact with flood water.

How to Make Sure Your Water is Safe -

Listen for public announcements on the safety of the municipal water supply. Flooded, private water wells will need to be tested and disinfected after flood waters recede.

Safe water for drinking, cooking, and personal hygiene includes bottled, boiled, or treated water. Your state or local health department can make specific recommendations for boiling or treating water in your area.

Do not use contaminated water to wash dishes, brush your teeth, wash and prepare food, wash your hands, make ice, or make baby formula. If possible, use baby formula that does not need to have water added. You can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to wash your hands.

Regarding Sanitation and Hygiene -

It is critical for you to remember to practice basic hygiene during the emergency period. Always wash your hands with soap and clean water:

- * before preparing or eating food;
- * after toilet use;
- * after participating in flood cleanup activities; and
- * after handling articles contaminated with flood water or sewage.

Flood waters may contain fecal material from overflowing sewage systems, and agricultural and industrial byproducts. Although skin contact with flood water does not, by itself, pose a serious health risk, there is some risk of disease from eating or drinking anything contaminated with flood water. If you have any open cuts or sores that will be exposed to flood water, keep them as clean as possible by washing well with soap to control infection. If a wound develops redness, swelling, or drainage, seek immediate medical attention.

In addition, parents need to help children avoid waterborne illness. Do not allow children to play in flood water areas, wash children's hands frequently (always before meals), and do not allow children to play with flood-water contaminated toys that have not been disinfected. You can disinfect toys using a solution

of one cup of bleach in 5 gallons of water.

How to Clean Up -

Walls, hard-surfaced floors, and many other household surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected with a solution of 1 cup of bleach to five gallons of water. Wash all linens and clothing in hot water, or dry clean them. For items that cannot be washed or dry cleaned, such as mattresses and upholstered furniture, air dry them in the sun and then spray them thoroughly with a disinfectant. Steam clean all carpeting. If there has been a backflow of sewage into the house, wear rubber boots and waterproof gloves during cleanup. Remove and discard contaminated household materials that cannot be disinfected, such as wall coverings, cloth, rugs, and drywall.

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For more information, please contact, Ross Doman, Public Information Officer, Wyoming Department of Health, (307) 777-6420