As clean-up efforts are underway in San Jose following the recent flooding, the Santa Clara County Public Health Department reminds residents about protecting themselves when exposed to floodwaters.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), outbreaks of infectious diseases after a flood in the U.S. are very unusual. Exposure to flood water alone is not a reason to give tetanus vaccine or any other vaccine.

- If a person is injured through a puncture wound, and it’s been more than 5 years since your last tetanus shot, you should seek medical attention immediately and get a tetanus booster.
- If you have a minor wound, and it’s been more than 10 years since your last tetanus shot, you should consult a medical provider about the need to get a tetanus booster.

In addition to immunization, it is important to remember that open wounds and rashes exposed to flood waters can become infected. To protect yourself and your family:

- Avoid exposure to flood waters if you have an open wound.
- Cover open wounds with a waterproof bandage.
- Keep open wounds as clean as possible by washing well with soap and clean water.
- If a wound develops redness, swelling, or drainage, seek immediate medical attention.