

River recedes but water contaminated

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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The Platte River is not roaring through Dawson County anymore but emergency management officials still warn residents to stay out of the water.

“This river has been through sewage treatment plants, feedlots, septic tanks, hazardous material facilities,” said county emergency management director Brian Woldt. “It could pose health risks for people who get in the water.”

Eventually, Woldt said the contaminated water will naturally filter down through the ground and disappear from the river and area lakes but how long that will take is unknown.

He noted that privately owned wells inundated by floodwater should be tested to make sure they are contaminant free.

As far as county damage from flooding in the past 10 days, Woldt said there was minor road damage that will be covered by the maintenance budget.

“I have no idea about personal property damage,” he said.

Woldt said the river in Dawson County has dropped below flood stage but is still higher than normal for this time of year because of rain in the mountains and the surge of water that devastated parts of Colorado in September.