



Cleaning Up After a Flood

After flooding, it is important to know how to clean up safely. Listen to local authorities to determine when it is safe to return home. Do not return home until officials indicate it is safe to do so. Stay vigilant and monitor radio or TV stations for local emergency management officials' guidance.

Ensure water is safe to drink, cook, or clean with after a flood. Oftentimes local officials put a boil water order in place following a flood or hurricane. Never run a generator inside your home, and keep it away from windows, doors, and vents.

Tips from FEMA for clean-up after returning home:

- Always wear protective clothing including long-sleeved shirts, long pants, rubber or plastic gloves and waterproof boots or shoes.
- Before entering your home, look outside for damaged power lines, gas lines, and other exterior damage.
- Take photos of your damage before you begin to clean up and save repair receipts.
- Get rid of mold. Mold may have contaminated your home which raises the health risk for those with asthma, allergies, and breathing conditions. Open doors and windows to air out your house before spending any length of time inside.
- Turn off main electrical power and water systems, and do not use gas appliances until a professional can ensure they are safe.
- Check all ceilings and floors for signs of sagging or other potentially dangerous structural damage.
- Throw out all foods, beverages, and medicines exposed to flood waters or mud including canned goods and containers with food or liquid.
- Throw out any items that absorb water and you cannot clean or disinfect (i.e. mattresses, carpeting, stuffed animals, etc.).
- Beware of insects, and other animals that may be on your property or in your home.
- Remove all drywall and insulation that has been in contact with floodwaters.
- Clean all hard surfaces (flooring, countertops, appliances, sinks, etc.) thoroughly with hot water and soap or detergent.

