

Restoring Your Home to Satisfactory, Sanitary Condition After a Flood

Flood water can be heavily contaminated with sewage and other pollutants and may pose a serious health hazard. During flood conditions the water leaves the normal course of stream and river beds and may come in contact with sources of contamination. Sewer back-ups may also occur.

Treat all flood water impacted surfaces and furnishings as toxic until properly decontaminated. Keep children and pets out of contaminated areas.

Do not track contaminated material into undamaged areas.

The following measures should be taken to restore your home to a sanitary condition:



- Pump or remove water from the basement.
- All standing water in flooded basements should be disinfected with a chlorine solution made by adding one liter of bleach - javex- to four liters of water. Estimate the volume of standing water and add the proportionate volume of bleach. For earth or ground basements add chloride of lime to the floor.
- Where practical and weather permits all movable furnishings in contact with flood waters should be taken outside. All wood work and items of impervious material, plastics, metal etc. should be cleaned with soap and water then washed again with a solution of one part javex- bleach- with four parts water.
- Upholstered furnishings in contact with flood water should be dried outside where possible and professionally cleaned. Upholstered furniture, or stuffed articles in contact with raw sewage should be discarded.
- Carpets in contact with a flood should be professionally cleaned; sewage soaked, carpets must be discarded.
- All surfaces and structures, after washing with soap and water including walls, ceilings and floors that have been in contact with flood waters should be then washed down with a chlorine solution of one part javex to four parts water. The cleaning should extend to 20 inches above water line. Check for mold regularly for one month after clean-up and if mold is encountered kill by, again, applying a chlorine solution or rubbing alcohol.
- Once the water has been removed from the basement, remove all accumulated silt, mud or sewage. If there is evidence of sewage, bag, tag and dispose of as directed by municipal guidelines.
- Linens and washable clothing should be washed and rinsed several times in cold water treated with one cup of javex (bleach) per washer load; dry quickly.
- Discard and replace all insulation material, mattresses, stuffed toys, pillows, padding and cushions that have been soaked.
- Following the interior cleanup attention should be directed to removing the accumulated debris and flood borne materials from the yard or exterior. Such accumulations attract rodents and insects which may transmit disease. If there is a significant delay in the disposal of such materials the accumulation should be sprayed with an insecticide.

Food Safety

Any of the following foods exposed to flood water must be disposed of:

- contents of freezer or refrigerator
- all meats
- all fresh fruit and vegetables
- all boxed food.
- all bottled drink and products in jars, including home preserves, spices, condiments etc. since the area under the seal of jars and bottles ca not be adequately disinfected.
- all medicines, cosmetics and other toiletries.



Canned foods without signs of damage to the seal or large dents can be salvaged if the can is thoroughly washed and disinfected. Cans showing signs of leakage, bloating or the seal is damaged should be discarded.

All contaminated dishes, utensils and food contact surfaces such as cutting boards and counter tops should be washed with warm water and soap and then sanitized with a chlorine solution. Wooden utensils should be discarded.

If there is any doubt as to whether a food item has been in contact with a flood water, throw it out.

During the course of the clean up wash hands before handling any salvageable food products.

If you require more information contact
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