

Cleaning Up After a Flood

Storms and floods can bring extraordinary changes and challenges to you are if they occur. Many of your friends and neighbors have been affected by flooding, while others may have spent exhausting hours filling sandbags, evacuating and helping with emergencies.

After a flood, it is important that you take precautions to make sure your home is safe after a flood.

- Keep children and pets out of the affected area until cleanup has been completed.
- Wear rubber boots, gloves and goggles during cleanup of affected areas.
- Remove and discard items that can't be washed and disinfected including: mattresses, carpeting, upholstered furniture, pillows, books, etc.
- Remove and discard drywall and insulation that has been contaminated with sewage or floodwaters.
- Thoroughly clean all hard surfaces such as flooring wood, countertops, and other fixtures with hot water and laundry or dish detergent.
- Help the drying process by using fans, air condition units and dehumidifiers.
- Wash all clothes worn during the cleanup in hot water and detergent. These clothes should be washed separately from uncontaminated clothes and linens.
- Wash clothes contaminated with flood or sewage water in hot water and detergent. A laundromat be used for washing large quantities of clothes and linens until you water and wastewater has been inspected and services.
- Throw out any foods such as meats, produce, canned foods and other food items that have been in contact with the water. Floodwater contains germs and chemicals that can make you sick.
- Commercially canned foods that have sealed, airtight metal lids are safe to use after being thoroughly cleaned and sanitized.
- All cans, free of rust or dents must be washed and sanitized before they are opened. Wash containers in a detergent solution using a scrub brush. Rinse and in clean water, if available. Sanitize by immersing containers for 15 minutes in a solution of 2 teaspoons of chlorine bleach per quart of water at room temperature. Inspect cans and destroy any that bulge or leak. After sanitizing, remove containers from the solution and air-dry. Relabel the cans and use the contents as soon as possible, because containers might rust. Store containers where they will not be re-contaminated. When cooking, empty the contents from the can and boil for 10 minutes before eating.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water after you touch floodwater or anything that has been in flood water.
- If you become ill or injured, seek immediate attention.

For information about disaster preparedness you can visit several websites included www.FEMA.gov , www.Emergency.cdc.gov , and www.texashelp.tamu.edu.