



Floods | After

Hazard Preparation Checklist

What Should I Do After a Flood?

- ❑ Seek medical care at the nearest hospital or clinic, if necessary. Contaminated floodwater can cause infection.
- ❑ Adhere to official barricades and detours. Never try to walk, swim, or drive through moving water.
- ❑ If you evacuated, return home when emergency management officials indicate it is safe to do so.
- ❑ Check on friends and neighbors who may be more vulnerable due to functional needs.
- ❑ If you locate someone who requires rescue, contact local emergency services.
- ❑ Avoid flooded areas, and stay out of any building that has water around it.
- ❑ Use battery-powered lanterns or flashlights when examining buildings. **DO NOT USE CANDLES.**
- ❑ Examine the structure to ensure the building is not in danger of collapsing.
- ❑ Look for fire hazards, such as leaking gas lines, flooded electrical circuits, or submerged furnaces and appliances. If you smell gas or hear a hissing noise, open a window and quickly get outside. Turn off the gas, using the outside main valve if you can, and call the gas company from a neighbor's home.
- ❑ Look for electrical system damage. If you see sparks or broken or frayed wires, or if you smell burning insulation, turn off the electricity at the main circuit box (but do not step in water to do so). Call an electrician if required. Electrical equipment should be checked and dried before being returned to service.
- ❑ Check for sewage and water line damage. If damage exists, avoid using the toilets and call a plumber and the water company. Avoid using water from the tap.
- ❑ Avoid drinking or preparing food with tap water until you are certain it is safe. Floodwater may have contaminated public water supplies or wells. Local officials will provide information.
- ❑ Check refrigerated food for spoilage. If in doubt, throw it out.
- ❑ Take pictures of the damage, both of the building and its contents, for insurance claims.
- ❑ Open windows and doors to ventilate and dry your home.
- ❑ Pump out flooded basements gradually (about one-third of the water per day) to avoid structural damage. If the water is pumped out completely in a short period of time, pressure from water on the outside could cause basement walls to collapse.
- ❑ Service damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits, and leaching systems as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are health hazards.
- ❑ If you have lost power and are using a generator, be sure to follow generator safety procedures.
- ❑ Throw away food and drinking water that has come in contact with floodwater, including canned goods. It is impossible to know if containers were damaged and the seals compromised.
- ❑ Discard contaminated wooden spoons, plastic utensils, baby bottle nipples, and pacifiers.
- ❑ Disinfect metal pans and utensils by boiling them in clean or properly treated water.