

FOOD SAFETY

You should generally discard anything in soft packaging or screw-top glass bottles that may have been in contact with flood water. You can sometimes save commercially canned goods in metal cans.

To clean canned goods:

- remove the labels
- wash in water and detergent
- sanitize with a solution of one tablespoon bleach in a gallon of water

Discard canned goods if:

- the surface is rusted and pitted
- the can is swollen or leaking
- the can is badly creased or dented at the rims or seams

Goods in rigid plastic containers should be saved only if they:

- were *not* submerged in flood water
- are *not* soiled around the cap or closure
- do *not* have a defective closure
- do *not* have a dented cap or crown, or an abnormal rim seal

Discard refrigerated or frozen food if:

- it normally requires refrigeration, and it's been above 40 degrees F. for *four hours* or more
- it had been frozen, and it's been *thawed* for two hours or more
- it has deteriorated in quality, or may have been in contact with *flood water*

AND ALWAYS REMEMBER ---

If in doubt... throw it out!

SALVAGING HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

Items Soaked by Floodwaters

Should I throw them out?

Usually

Mattresses, pillows
Foam rubber
Large carpets, carpet padding
Upholstered couches and chairs
Books, paper products

Always

Food
Cosmetics
Medicines and medical supplies
Stuffed animals
Baby toys

For more information about drying out your home; clean up; pumping out your basement; flood-proofing; and repair, contact your local American Red Cross office and request *Repairing Your Flooded Home*, ARC publication 4477.

To contact your local health department:

http://www.odh.state.oh.us/Directories/LHD/LHD_LIST.HTM

◆ Or call 1-614-466-3543 ◆

For disaster information, log on to
<http://www.ema.ohio.gov>

Cleaning Up After a Flood

*Hand Washing
Food Safety
Home Restoration*

*Guidelines from...
Ohio Emergency
Management Agency*



FEMA

Remember the golden rule of clean-up work:

**WASH YOUR HANDS
THOROUGHLY
-- AND DO IT OFTEN!**

Simple, basic hygiene – hand washing – is the single most important thing you can do to protect your health when you clean up after a flood.

Be sure to wash your hands...

- After you touch any surfaces or objects that may have been in contact with flood water or sewage
- Before you eat or drink anything
- Before you touch your face

What if there's no running water?

- Transport and store clean water in clean plastic containers
- Get a beverage cooler equipped with a spigot – and keep it filled with clean water for hand washing

What if the water is contaminated?

If the water is suspect, add a **tablespoon of bleach** to each gallon of water before you wash your hands with it.

The fine art of hand washing

- 1. Wet hands**
- 2. Soap up**
- 3. Work up a lather**
- 4. Use a nail brush**
- 5. Rinse**
- 6. Use soap & lather up again**
- 7. Rinse**
- 8. Dry hands with paper towel**

How do I get my home cleaned up?

The basics of drying out your home:

- Open windows and doors – or use exhaust fans
- Use a room de-humidifier and empty it often.

Drying walls and other surfaces:

- Cavities in walls, floors and ceilings must be opened, cleaned, *decontaminated and thoroughly dried.*
- Walls must be allowed to dry *from the inside.*
- Remove mud and water *from all surfaces and get* surface materials dry within 24 to 48 hours.
- Release any water or mud that's been trapped in wall, ceiling or floor cavities.
- Remove all interior wall finishing materials and insulation – ***and throw out any wet insulation.***

Check with local permit authority before doing any flood-related demolition.

Remember:

- Most plaster, wallboard and paneling will have to be discarded.
- If you think you may have asbestos materials in your home, call the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, Division of Air Pollution Control, at 1-614-644-2270.
- If you have allergies, wear a dust mask. Consult with your physician if you have questions.
- Be careful if you use a gasoline-powered engine indoors – you could be exposing yourself to carbon monoxide.

What can I keep – and what do I have to throw away?

Carpeting

- Pull up waterlogged carpet immediately, to prevent any further floor damage.
- *Carpet pads cannot be saved.* They must be removed and discarded.
- Attempt to save carpets or throw rugs only if they would be very expensive to replace.
- Clean and dry your floors thoroughly before re-carpeting.

Floors and Woodwork

- Remove all mud and silt.
- Scrub floors and woodwork within 48 hours, using a stiff brush, water, detergent and disinfectant.
- Allow all wood to dry thoroughly.

Furniture

- Discard upholstered furniture if it has been exposed to flood water or sewage.
- Clean, rinse and disinfect wood furniture.
- Place wood furniture outside in a shady area so it will dry slowly.

Remember:

- If any materials are still wet or moist after 24 to 48 hours, you should assume they have mold growing on them.
- You can disinfect floors or wood surfaces using a solution of one cup bleach in a gallon of water

DO NOT attempt to drive through or cross a flooded road. Nationally, more than 50 percent of flood deaths are vehicle related.