

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

Flooding can leave you up a creek without a paddle. Knowing what to do once the water recedes will ensure you keep your family safe and weather the storm.

NEVER

Never pump flood water into the sewer. The additional water pumped into the sewer system overtaxes those pipes and sends sewage spilling into homes in low-lying areas.



BACTERIA

Flooding can cause trouble with water purification and sewage systems. Most floods do not cause serious outbreaks of disease. Sickness, however, occurs more commonly in workers cleaning up contaminated flood water.



CHLORINE

Chlorine is a highly efficient disinfectant, and is added to most public water supplies to kill disease-causing pathogens, such as bacteria, viruses and protozoans, that commonly grow in water supply reservoirs, on the walls of water mains and in storage tanks.

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WHAT TO DO AFTER THE FLOOD?

How to stay safe once things dry up

WELLS

Wells that are more than 10 years old or less than 50 feet deep are likely to be contaminated, even if there is no apparent damage. Regardless, always check the following:

- 1 Check whether the well was flooded
- 2 Ensure that air vacuum release valves aren't submerged by flood waters
- 3 Inspect electrical components and wires
- 4 Check the well casing
- 5 Check the well cap and seal

If you suspect that your well may be contaminated, contact your local or state health department for specific advice on disinfecting your well.

SEPTIC SYSTEMS

Most septic tanks are not damaged by flooding since they are below ground. You will, however, want to follow a few guidelines:

- 1 Pump the septic system as soon as possible AFTER the flood
- 2 Do not use the sewage system until water in the soil absorption field is lower than the water around the house
- 3 If sewage has backed up into the basement, clean the area and disinfect the floor
- 4 Have your septic tank professionally tested if there are any concerns

Only trained specialists should clean or repair septic tanks because tanks may contain dangerous gases. Contact your health department for a list of septic system contractors.

INDOOR SEWAGE CONTAMINATION

Thorough cleaning of indoor sewage contamination is necessary to protect people from harmful bacteria and viruses:

- 1 Clean as soon as possible
- 2 Keep children and pets out of the area
- 3 Remove all furniture, loose rugs and other items from the area
- 4 All hard surfaces should be thoroughly cleaned with a bleach solution
- 5 Disinfect mops, brooms and brushes with the bleach solution
- 6 Wash your hands thoroughly

Contact your homeowner's insurance company prior to hiring a disaster restoration company.

For more information, contact your local health department



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DRINKING WATER