

Recommended Flood Cleanup Procedures

- If flood waters are beginning to come into your home, move as much stuff as you can to higher ground, make sure all of your valuables and irreplaceable items are secure in a water tight, fire proof container.
- Mold develops faster, the hotter it is. Mold also becomes airborne and can affect your breathing. Use masks that are rated N95. You can also use respirators. If there is a lot of water still in the home or a lot of mold or other “nasty” stuff, you should probably be wearing water proof gloves, long sleeve shirts, pants, water proof boots, etc to keep the contamination out off of your body.
- As soon as possible after the flood waters have begun to recede and you can safely return to your home, you must dispose of anything porous that has had “black” water damage. “Black” water damage is any water that comes into your home from the outside, in other words, not from your water supply pipes that do not have contaminated water in them.
- Anything that has not gotten wet should be removed to a storage area that has not been flooded and/or contaminated. If something has been contaminated but can be cleaned/uncontaminated, it cannot be moved into the uncontaminated storage area until after it has been cleaned/uncontaminated. Mold grows like crazy and can easily spread to other items if not properly separated.
- All carpet and linoleum will need to be removed. Wood laminate flooring must be removed. It is possible to dry out and disinfect real wood flooring, but it is quite a job, check with a local contractor and review their steps (and cost) to perform this type of restoration. Tile flooring does not have to be removed; it can be cleaned just like concrete flooring.
- All drywall must be removed to at least 12” above the wet line. Drywall soaks up water like a sponge so the wet line will normally be higher than the flood level in the room. You cannot dry out or remove mold from drywall, it must be discarded. It is suggested that you remove the drywall to the next level equal to 4’ as drywall comes in 4’ sheets. This will also allow you to remove the drywall at the tape line, giving you a straight line when you install the new sheets. The cost of the drywall is not worth the extra time, mud and tape, etc, that it will take if you try to do it any other way, though the drywall contractors will like the extra money they will charge you for their time!

- If your bath area was done with Durarock/Cement board, it can be disinfected.
- All insulation must be removed following the same rules as the drywall. Make sure that you check behind areas such as tubs, showers, etc.
- Any furniture that got wet also needs discarded if it is porous in any way.
- Paneling will need to be discarded.
- Cabinets will more than likely be made of particle board and will have soaked up water from the bottom, they must also be discarded.
- If the water level reached any electrical wiring, most counties/cities will also require that this be removed and discarded. This includes but is not limited to outlets, switches, fixtures, electric panels, etc. Check with your local authorities about this, wires corrode when they get wet.
- If you have gas or electric to your home, many times the utility companies shut off the supply lines. You must contact your local authorities to see what they are requiring to get your utilities turned back on.
- When you have finished removing all of the above, you will have a home that is back to the basic studs and outside walls in the home. You must make sure you get every spec of dirt, dust and debris that you can removed from the walls, floors, corners, etc.
- Once everything is removed, all of the wood and bare walls, not drywall that is left that wasn't wet, must be sprayed down with bleach. It is recommended that you use a garden type sprayer and mix 1 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water.
- All floors should be pressure washed or at least soaked with the bleach mixture and rinsed as listed above.
- Let the house sit and dry for 1 to 2 days with running commercial dehumidifiers and fans.
- Mix 2 cups of borax to 3 gallons of water in a garden type sprayer and spray all of the infected areas.
- Continue to let the home dry with the dehumidifiers and fans until the home is completely dry. You can dry the home without the above, but it will take longer.
- You may or may not need to get a permit and county/city approval to remodel the damage, check with your local authorities and then get to work!

- Most insurance companies and the government should not keep you from moving forward with the cleanup and restoration of your home. The longer your home sits there, the more damage that is being done. Make sure you take plenty of pictures to document all of the damage and get to work!