

AFTER THE FLOODS

Advice on what to do if your property has been affected by flooding



Starting off

- Talk to your insurance company and follow their advice. If it will take a number of days for a loss adjustor to visit your home, you may need to throw things away. If this is the case use common sense to provide evidence of what you have thrown away. Take several photographs of everything you dispose of and write down details such as the make and serial number of the products. If you need to get rid of flood damaged carpets, cut off and keep samples.
- Wear rubber boots, waterproof gloves and an apron to clean up. If cleaning causes a lot of water to splash from scrubbing, hosing or pressure-washing, wear a standard face mask, such as those sold by DIY stores. Goggles offer added protection and they can be reused after thorough washing
- Remember to wash your hands thoroughly after each clean-up session. Keep open cuts or sores clean and use waterproof plasters to prevent them being exposed to floodwater
- Take care with electrics and gas: Do not turn on gas or electrics if they may have got wet. Only turn them on when they have been checked by a qualified technician



Hampshire
County Council

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How and what to clean

- Wash clothes used for cleaning on a separate cycle from your other clothes
- Clean all hard surfaces (eg walls, floors) with hot water and detergent
- Clean and disinfect work surfaces, plates, pans, cutlery, chopping boards etc. before using them with food. If you have a working dishwasher, this is a more efficient way to clean and sanitise smaller items. Throw away wooden chopping boards and wooden spoons if contaminated by floodwater
- Wash soft items (eg clothing, bedding and children's toys) on a 60°C cycle with detergent. If you suspect problems with your drainage system, it is recommended that a launderette be used for washing large quantities of clothes and linens until your waste-water system has been checked

Drying out

- Ensure good ventilation if using portable indoor heating appliances to dry out indoor spaces. Do not use petrol or diesel generators or other similar fuel-driven equipment indoors: the exhaust gases contain carbon monoxide, which can kill
- Heating, dehumidifiers and good ventilation can also help dry out your home. If you have gas or oil central heating and it has been checked by an engineer, turn it on. Keep the thermostat between 20°C to 22°C for steady drying if you have air bricks to any under floor spaces, ensure that these are



unblocked to give cross ventilation to these areas. As floorboards and walls continue to dry out, any loose material and dust resulting from this should be vacuumed up on a regular basis

- When you can, remove dirty water and silt from the property including the space under the ground floor if you have wooden floors. This space may need pumping out
- Mould should disappear as your home dries out but if it persists, contact a specialist cleaner
- Place rubbish in your wheelie bin
- Dispose of dead rodents and pests in a plastic bag, wearing rubber gloves
- Your insurer or loss adjuster may appoint a specialist drying company to disinfect and dry your home. At the end of this process, they will then certify that your home is dry enough for repair work to start.

Gardens and allotments

- Wear boots and rubber gloves to clean-up and cover all open wounds.
- Ensure hands are washed thoroughly afterwards
- Remove all solid waste
- Clean all hard surfaces (e.g. walls, floors) with hot water and a household detergent.

- Do not let young children play on affected grassed or paved areas until they have been cleaned down and are back to their normal condition
- Sunlight will help destroy harmful bacteria so grass areas should be safe to use after 3-4 weeks after flooding depending on the environmental conditions
- Do not eat any fruit/vegetables growing in your garden that has been covered in flood water:



Pets

- Don't let your pet drink flood water. If there is still a lot of flood water around, keep your dog on a lead and limit access to affected areas
- If your garden has been affected by flood water keep pets away until the clean-up has been completed. Make sure all obvious signs of contamination and rubbish are gone from your garden
- Clean away any mud and dry your pet well after being outdoors
- Wash your own and your children's hands regularly when handling a pet that has been outdoors

Getting rid of sandbags

- Before disposing of sandbags, make sure that there is no risk of further flooding. The environment agency and your local District Council will have advice on flooding risk
- Sandbags can be contaminated with sewage and oils when they come into contact with floodwater. Make sure you wear gloves when handling sandbags and wash your hands well after

For further information please visit www.hants.gov.uk