

FLOOD VICTIMS!

NOTICE!

If you have had flood waters enter your home or business, you will need to be aware of the following procedures. Just one inch is enough to survey the damage as explained below.

IF YOU NEED MORE ASSISTANCE:

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PLANNING TO HIRE A CONTRACTOR?

Be certain you:

KNOW your contractor;
DO NOT advance money before work begins;
CHECK AND VERIFY local references.

PREVENTING AND REPAIRING FLOOD DAMAGE

FLOOD DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

There are two forms of flood damage:

- 1) Rising/Standing Water fills a structure, but the force of the water does not, itself, cause damage.
- 2) Moving Water generates force which causes structural damage. Consult a local Architect or Engineer to determine if structural damage has occurred. Do not proceed until building condition has been determined by a professional or the local Building Official.

RISING WATER DAMAGE AND RECOVERY

TIME IS THE KEY FACTOR IN THE EXTENT OF THE DAMAGE DONE TO THE ELEMENTS OF THE HOUSE (BUILDING). WITH QUICK ACTION, ALMOST ALL ELEMENTS ARE REUSABLE IF THE WATER WAS NOT IN THE HOUSE LONGER THAN 2 TO 3 HOURS. BEYOND THIS TIME, ITEMS SUCH AS GYPSUM BOARD ON THE WALL AND INSULATION BECOME DAMAGED BEYOND REPAIR.

1. **VISITORS:** The inhabitants of the creeks and river bottoms that have been displaced by rising waters will seek high structures in the water for shelter. Look carefully in your closets and cabinets as well as attic spaces for animals and snakes upon re-entering your home or building.
2. **CARPETS:** Remove as soon as possible and place outside if possible or raise on some type of device to allow air to circulate around and thoroughly dry the carpet. The roof of the structure is usually a good place. The carpet pad will probably be destroyed by the process of removal from the floor.
3. **WOOD FLOORING:** Wood flooring is potentially the most damaged of the materials in the home or building because of the swelling of the wood. This can force the wood flooring to swell and buckle around the room. Generally, the wood floors will need to be removed and replaced. If the home or other structure is of pier and beam construction, the floor and the sub-floor may need to be removed by cutting the floor along the inside of the wall plate line and replacing both after the structure dries.
4. **INTERIOR WALLS:** Most residential structures will have walls constructed of wood studs and gypsum board. 1 or 2 hours generally will not cause significant damage to the gypsum board, but a longer exposure time will cause damage. The wall board will powder and mildew causing odors and

an unacceptable base for paint. Remove the gypsum board from at least 12 inches above the high water line to the floor below. Also remove the insulation, if any, from the wall. It will not be reusable. Allow the framing to thoroughly dry before applying the new gypsum wall board.

5. **FLOOR COVERING:** Floor covering other than carpet (e.g. clay tile) will generally weather the flood well. Vinyl, vinyl asbestos and vinyl composition tile may curl at the edges and the adhesive may not keep it secured to the floor. Removal and replacement is necessary.

WARNING: ALL MATERIALS CONTAINING 1% OR MORE ASBESTOS FIBERS ARE REQUIRED BY LAW TO BE REMOVED AND DISPOSED OF IN ACCORDANCE WITH EPA, OSHA AND STATE LAWS. SKILLED PERSONS SHOULD BE EMPLOYED TO ACCOMPLISH THIS. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY CAUSE YOU TO SUFFER A LARGE FINE AND CLEAN UP COSTS!

6. **DOORS AND CABINETS:** Both are generally constructed of plywood or particle board which will swell and de-laminate with time. It will not appear until several days after the waters recede and will appear as the layers of the plywood on the doors are peeling apart. Wood panel doors are not usually affected and may be usable after they are allowed to dry.

7. **CEILINGS:** Even though the water may not have reached the ceiling, the extreme humidity may cause swelling above the gypsum board and cause pulling loose from the ceiling framing. Check by pressing upward on the ceiling and if the nail head appears on the surface, there is some damage. Re-nailing and refinishing are the minimum and replacement may be necessary. Check the insulation in the attic when this occurs as it may be moist and not allow the gypsum board to dry causing mildew. If the insulation is rockwool or cellulose, replacement is required.

8. **ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS:** Have the electrical systems thoroughly checked especially if the water rose above the wall or floor outlets. The silt can collect in these and cause short circuits. Check light fixtures for water.

9. **GAS SYSTEM:** Water can collect in gas lines causing the pilot to burn improperly and in some cases to go out. Gas can escape if there is a faulty valve or thermocouple.

10. **APPLIANCES:** Most appliances have the electric motor mounted very low to the floor so even a small amount of water in the home can cause damage to the motors and bearings. Do not attempt to use these until the motors' controls and elements have been checked by qualified people.

11. **EXTERIOR WALLS:** Most homes are constructed of brick veneer with a water-resistant sheathing as a backup. The sheathing generally will not be damaged if the weeps are free, however, to ensure that the water in the wall is allowed to escape and the cavity to dry, removal of a brick at the base of the wall every 48" or so will aid the drying. If done properly, the mortar can be cut around a brick and the brick saved for replacement. In some extreme cases, brick(s) at the top of the wall may need to be removed.

12. **MILDEW AND MOLD:** With high humidity and warm days, mildew and mold grow well. One mistake made is to turn on the heating equipment of the house to dry the materials. This causes rapid growth of mildew and molds. Floor fans and open windows and doors are best to allow "natural" drying is the best defense. Keep the space well ventilated for several days until dry. The length of time varies. If extensive water soaking has occurred, the testing of materials should be done with a Moisture Meter. Common household bleach (Clorox or similar bleaches) will help rid your structure of mildew and molds.

13. **REPAINTING:** Even those areas found to be sound and reusable probably will have some stains. The stains will bleed through the new paint if precautions are not taken to prevent this. Cover the stain with white shellac or other paint type materials available from your paint store. One popular brand of water stain cover is *KILZ*. Be sure all surfaces are thoroughly dry before painting or the paint will blister and peel.

B E C A R E F U L & S A F E !