

# Protect Yourself & Your Family

## IMPORTANT STEPS TO TAKE WHEN DEALING WITH THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF FLOODING

- **Wash your hands.**



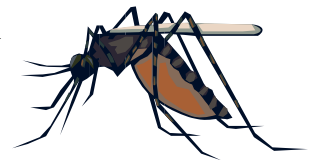
- Use soap and water to wash your hands.
- If water isn't available, you can use alcohol-based products made for washing hands.

- **Keep children and pets out of the affected area until cleanup has been completed.**

- **Prevent and treat cuts and puncture wounds.**

- Wear rubber boots, rubber gloves, and goggles during cleanup of affected area.
- Clean out all open wounds and cuts with soap and clean water. Apply an antibiotic ointment. Contact a doctor to find out whether more treatment is needed (such as a tetanus shot)

- **Prevent mosquito bites** by wearing long pants, socks, and long-sleeved shirts and by using insect repellents that contain DEET or Picaridin.



- **Wash all clothes** worn during the cleanup in hot water and detergent. These clothes should be washed separately from uncontaminated clothes and linens.

## Prevent illness from FOOD

- **Identify and throw away food that may not be safe to eat.**
  - Throw away food that may have come in contact with flood or storm water.
  - Throw away canned foods that are bulging, opened, or damaged.
  - Throw away perishable foods (including meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers) that have been above 40°F for 2 hours or more. While the power is out, keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
  - If cans have come in contact with floodwater or storm water, remove the labels, wash the cans, and dip them in a solution of 1 cup of bleach in 5 gallons of water. Relabel the cans with a marker



## Prevent illness from WATER

- Local authorities will tell you if tap water is safe to drink or to use for cooking or bathing. If the water is not safe to use, follow local instructions to use bottled water or to boil water for cooking, cleaning, or bathing.



- Hold water at a rolling boil for 1 minute to kill bacteria.
- For infants, use **only** pre-prepared canned baby formula. Do not use powdered formulas prepared with treated water.
- Clean children's toys that have come in contact with water. Use a solution of 1 cup of bleach in 5 gallons of water to clean the toys. Let toys air dry after cleaning.

## Prevent and treat OTHER ILLNESS and INJURIES

- **Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.** Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that is produced by many types of equipment and is poisonous to breathe.
  - Don't use a generator, pressure washer, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline- or charcoal-burning device inside your home, basement, or garage or near a window, door, or vent.
  - Don't run a car or truck inside a garage attached to your house, even if you leave the door open.
  - Don't heat your house with a gas oven. I
  - If your carbon monoxide detector sounds, leave your home immediately and call 911.
  - Seek prompt medical attention if you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning and are feeling dizzy, light-headed, or nauseated.
- Do not drive vehicles or heavy equipment through water.

- Wear a life jacket if you have to work in or near floodwater,
  
- **Beware of electrical and fire hazards.**
  - NEVER touch a fallen power line.
  - Call the power company to report fallen power lines.
  - Avoid contact with overhead power lines during cleanup and other activities.
  - If electrical circuits and equipment have gotten wet or are in or near water, turn off the power at the main breaker or fuse on the service panel. Do not turn the power back on until electrical equipment has been inspected by a qualified electrician.
  - Do not burn candles near flammable items or leave the candle unattended. If possible, use flashlights or other battery-operated lights instead of candles.
  
- **Clean up and prevent mold growth.**
  - Clean up and dry out the building quickly (within 24 to 48 hours if possible).
  - Open doors and windows. Use fans to dry out the building.
  - To *prevent* mold growth, clean wet items and surfaces with detergent and water.
  - To *remove* mold growth, wear rubber gloves, open windows and doors, and clean with a bleach solution of 1 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water.
  - Throw away porous items (for example, carpet and upholstered furniture) that cannot be dried quickly.
  
- **Pace yourself and get support.**
  - Be alert to physical and emotional exhaustion or strain.
  - Try not to work alone. Use teams of two or more people to move bulky objects. Avoid lifting any material that weighs more than 50 pounds (per person).
  - When it's hot, stay in air-conditioned buildings; take breaks in shaded areas or in cool rooms; drink water and nonalcoholic fluids often; wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing; and do outdoor activities during cooler hours.

