



## After the Flood: Flood Safety & Cleanup Guidance



[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)  
[American Red Cross](#)

As Ohio floodwaters start to recede and residents return to their homes, emergency managers and state officials encourage practicing safe measures while cleanup and damage assessment efforts begin.

When cleaning up your home after a flood, you need to decide whether to start by tackling the largest issues across the entire home, or by focusing on one or two key rooms, before moving to greater needs of attention.

Ohio residents needing assistance with cleanup efforts (supplies, resources, etc.) can contact [Ohio VOAD](#) (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters) at **740-440-5474**.

### FLOOD HAZARDS

**Drowning** – Flood water poses drowning risks for everyone, regardless of their ability to swim. Swiftly moving shallow water can be deadly. Even shallow standing water can be dangerous for small children. Never allow children to play near or swim in swollen creeks, culverts or floodwaters.

Vehicles do not provide adequate protection from floodwaters. Never attempt to drive through a flooded area. Turn Around, Don't Drown®. Many deaths have resulted from attempts to drive or walk through flooded roadways.

### Electrical Hazards

- Never touch a fallen power line. Call the power company to report downed lines.
- Do not drive or walk through standing floodwater. Downed power lines could be underwater, posing an electrocution hazard.

### FLOOD CLEANUP GUIDANCE INSIDE THE HOME

- Keep children and pets out of the affected area until cleanup has been completed.
- Take photos of each room with flood damage for insurance and damage assessment purposes. [Ohio Department of Insurance Home Inventory Checklist](#)

- Wear personal protective gear, including rubber boots, rubber gloves and goggles or safety glasses during cleanup.
- If cleaning areas with mold damage, wear a mask or respirator.
- To help prevent mold, remove and throw away items that cannot be washed and disinfected: mattresses, carpeting, carpet padding, upholstered furniture, cosmetics, stuffed animals, baby toys, pillows, foam-rubber items, books, wall coverings, and most paper products. Water or moisture inside a flooded building can develop mold within 24 to 48 hours.
- Remove and discard drywall and insulation that has been contaminated with sewage or flood water.
- Thoroughly clean all hard surfaces with hot water and laundry or dish detergent.
- Help the drying process by using fans, air conditioning units and dehumidifiers.
- Throw out all food, beverages and medicine exposed to floodwater and mud. *“When in doubt, throw it out.”* This includes canned goods, plastic utensils, baby bottle nipples and containers with food or liquid that has been sealed shut.
- Do not use water you suspect, or have been told, is contaminated to wash dishes, brush your teeth, bathe, wash and prepare food, wash your hands, make ice, or make baby formula. **Safe water** for consumption and personal hygiene includes bottled, boiled or treated water. Your local health department can make specific recommendations for boiling or treating water in your area.
- After completion of cleanup, wash your hands with soap and clean water.
- Wash all clothes worn during cleanup or contaminated with flood or sewage water in hot water and detergent. The CDC recommends using a laundromat for washing large quantities of clothes and linens until your onsite waste-water system has been professionally inspected and serviced.
- Seek immediate medical attention if you become injured or ill.