

***LIVINGSTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
2300 EAST GRAND RIVER SUITE 102
HOWELL, MICHIGAN 48843
517-546-9858***

Priorities for Clean-Up and Repair After a Flood

The following guidelines will help you get your home back to livable standards as soon as possible. The first priority is your safety. For instance, buildings may not be habitable during the cleaning process. Before entering the house, shut off the gas. Also, to avoid electrical shock, shut the power off to flooded areas and wear rubber boots. Wear waterproof gloves when handling flood contaminated materials. Finally, before you get started, assemble a bare essential first aid kit for minor injuries that may occur while cleaning.

- Start by taking photos or a video for insurance claims and tax deductions. Keep records of all expenses. Books and papers may be frozen until you have time to work with them. Place waxed paper between layers and place items inside plastic bags before freezing.
- Next, examine the building's structure. Check the foundation for settling, cracking or undermining. Examine walls, floors and windows. Have an electrician check the electrical system. If the basement is flooded, pump the water out in stages, about 1/3 each day. If you have a well, you may need to disinfect the well and plumbing.
- Your plan of action for the clean up process starts with removal of standing water. Use pails or pumps, shovel out any mud or silt, then vacuum with a wet/dry shop vacuum cleaner.
- Remove all soaked and contaminated materials. Place in plastic garbage bags and haul them outside.
- Shovel out mud and silt before it dries. If the walls are salvageable, hose down walls and floors before they dry. Rinse several times, then clean and disinfect them. Start at the bottom and work upward using chlorine bleach (**do not mix with ammonia; the fumes are toxic**).
- The heating system may need to be cleaned, dried and reconditioned. Turning the heat on will help the drying process. You may want to also use a dehumidifier.
- Dry out the walls and floors. This process may take several months.
- Treat items for mildew if necessary.

The clean up and subsequent repairs may take weeks, even months. For more detailed information, contact the Livingston County Department of Public Health at 517-546-9858 or a disaster restoration company for your specific needs.