



# Clark County Public Health Fact Sheet

## Flood: Cleaning Tips

Cleaning and disinfecting a home after a flood will help prevent the spread of disease and restore its livability. The Red Cross and other organizations often distribute clean-up kits after a disaster. After a flood, it is important to thoroughly clean and dry items that have become wet. If items are wet longer than 24-48 hours, they have the potential to be contaminated with mold.

**Drowning Hazard WARNING:** Children can drown in very small amounts of water. ***Do not leave cleaning buckets containing even small amounts of liquid unattended near children.***

### Cleaning Supplies Checklist

- Brooms, mops, rags, brushes, sponges, wet vacuums
- Buckets, garden hose, rubber gloves, protective eyewear, boots & N-95 mask
- Cleaning products, disinfectants
- Lubricating oil, trash bags, fans or dryers

### Cleaning Products

Most household cleaning products may be used. Clean one area at a time.

- **Read the label for safe and proper use of the product.** *Some products cannot be used on certain materials or surfaces.*
- Use a two-bucket approach; one bucket for cleaning solutions and the other for rinse water.
- Rinse out mop, sponge or rag in the rinse bucket. Replace the rinse water often.
- After cleaning, use a disinfectant to kill germs and neutralize odors.

### Disinfectants

Use commercial disinfectants or make a disinfectant by adding 1/4 cup of liquid household bleach to a gallon of water.

- If buying a disinfectant, follow the product label instructions exactly for the disinfectant to work.
- **Never mix bleach with any cleaning products; mixing can create toxic gases.**
- Empty buckets after each use.

### Drying

- Ventilating wet spaces aids in drying.
- All windows and doors should be opened, and fans and heaters used to speed drying.
- When drying machines are available, windows and doors should be closed and drying machines vented to the outdoors.

### Cleaning Guidelines

- *Permeable & Washable (i.e. clothing, bedding & other washable articles)*- simply run through the laundry
- *Non-Permeable & Washable (i.e. wood, metal, plastic, glass & ceramics)*- Mix a solution of lukewarm water & laundry detergent and wipe down your articles
- *Permeable but not washable (i.e. beds & furniture)* - If furnishings are moldy, consider discarding and replacing.

*For more information, please contact: Clark County Environmental Public Health Services  
Tel: (360) 397-8428 • Fax: (360) 397-8084 • [www.clark.wa.gov](http://www.clark.wa.gov)*