

Clean- Up and Repair After the Storm

Priorities for clean up and repair will vary with the type and severity of the damage. Buildings may not be habitable during the repair process. Before purchasing cleaners and disinfectants, take inventory of what needs to be cleaned (walls, floors, appliances, etc). Buy only cleaning products for the type of work required.

- Take photos of all damage for insurance claims and tax deductions. Keep records of all expenses.
- Assemble a first aid kit for minor injuries that may occur while cleaning or repairing.
- Examine the building's structure. Check foundations for settling, cracking, or undermining. Examine walls, floors, and windows to determine what repairs are necessary. You may need to hire a professional contractor, architect or engineer to perform a structural evaluation. Consider temporary repairs until extensive work can be completed.
- Make temporary repairs to holes in roofs, walls and windows. Permanent repairs should be made by a licensed contractor.
- Have a licensed electrician inspect and repair the electrical system. Take electrical appliances to a professional service repairman for necessary inspection and repair.
- Repair and clean your water system. Disinfect wells and water systems.
- Shovel out mud and silt before it dries.
- Wash flooded walls and floors with a hose before they dry. Start at the bottom and work upward.
- Scrub and disinfect walls and floors.
- Start your heating system, if possible. The heating system may need cleaning and reconditioning before it is operational. Use the heat to speed up drying.
- Dry out wall and floors. If necessary to improve drying, strip the walls of their drywall to the water level. Drill holes in exterior siding. Complete drying may take months.
- Repair buckled walls and floors.
- Make decisions about saving or discarding household contents. Clean, disinfect, and dry household items, furniture, carpets, clothing, dishes and bedding.
- Treat items for mildew.
- Care for damaged trees, shrubs, and lawn. It is important that broken limbs and fallen trees be removed as soon as possible to avoid any fire hazard as damaged foliage dries.
- Repaint, repair, and refinish all salvageable items.

