

At a glance...

- Never enter a flooded basement if the electricity or gas is still on.
- Never light a match or use an electrical appliance (including the phone) in an area where gas could be present.
- Never handle any connected electrical cords or appliances that are submerged if electricity is still on.
- Never use gasoline powered pumps or generators indoors. Gasoline engines create deadly carbon monoxide exhaust fumes.
- While the basement is still flooded, avoid flushing toilets or using other plumbing fixtures because the resulting discharge will make the basement more difficult to clean.



Personal Health

Maintaining good personal health involves washing hands frequently and keeping clothes clean. Hand washing should be done with clean, safe drinking water. When this is not available, use bottled, boiled or chemically disinfected water. If a person active in the clean-up process has an open sore, precautions should be taken to prevent contact with contaminated waters. If contact is made, disinfect the wound or sore immediately with soap, clean water and a disinfectant. DO NOT allow children to play in floodwater or areas that have been flooded.

Clean-up

Items that have come in contact with flood water should be dried, cleaned with soap or dish washing compound and sanitized with a chlorine-water solution (mix 1/2 cup of bleach per 1 gallon of water). Clothing, carpets, upholstered furniture, toys, bedding, and similar items should be discarded unless they can be cleaned and sanitized immediately. The assistance of a professional may be needed to properly clean certain items. After clean-up, make sure that all clothing and parts of the body which came in contact with the flood waters are thoroughly washed.

Water Supplies

Public and private water supplies may be contaminated in a flood situation. If on a public water supply, listen for public announcements on the safety of your area's water supply. If your home is served by a private well, the DuPage County Health Department will test your well for bacterial contamination. If uncertain about the safety of your water supply, we recommend using bottled water, boiling all water for 5 minutes before drinking. You can also add 5 drops of unscented household bleach to 1 gallon of water, mix and let stand for 30 minutes before drinking.

Food

Any food items, including cans, bottles and jars that come in contact with flood waters should be discarded immediately. Food stored in refrigerators or freezers that have not been subjected to flood water should be held below 40 °F at all times. You may want to transfer refrigerated perishable foods to an insulated cooler filled with ice. Food with a temperature above 40 °F. should be discarded. Never taste food to determine safety.