

# FLOODS: COMING HOME & CLEANING UP



## FACT SHEET

If you have to evacuate your home due to a flood, there are some important steps to take when you return.

### Re-Entering Your Home

- Check for structural damage before re-entering your home. Don't go in if there is any doubt about the safety of the home or building and seek professional advice.
- Even with guidance and assistance as mentioned above, when you do enter a damaged building, check it for buckled walls, electrical hazards, loose bricks, cracks, or any shifting of the foundation.
- Try to return during the daytime so that you do not have to use any lights, and keep power off until an electrician has inspected your system for safety.
- If you smell gas or hear blowing or hissing, open a window and quickly leave the building and contact the gas company.
- Check for sewage and water line damage. If you suspect damage, avoid using and call a plumber.



### Cleaning Up

- Walls, hard-surfaced floors, and many other household surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected with a solution of 1 cup of bleach to 5 gallons of water.
- Pay particular attention to surfaces that may come in contact with food, such as countertops, pantry shelves, refrigerators, etc.
- Clean thoroughly those areas where small children play.
- Wash all linens and clothing in hot water.
- Flood soaked furnishings such as upholstered couches, chairs, mattresses, or carpeting should be discarded; they cannot be effectively disinfected. Remove and discard contaminated household materials.



### Other Considerations

- Keep children and pets out of the affected area until cleanup has been completed.
- Wear rubber boots, gloves, and goggles during re-entry and clean-up.
- Seek medical attention if you become injured or ill.

**For more information, contact CCHD's Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program at 452-0881 x310 or visit [www.cchdmt.org](http://www.cchdmt.org) or [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).**