



Checklist: What to Do After a Flood

What should you do after a flood? This checklist breaks down the most important steps to take immediately after a flood.

- 1. Only Go Home After It's Safe:** Water can be unpredictable during a flood, rising quickly, washing out bridges, and creating hazards from utility lines or gas tanks. Return home only when it's safe to do so, and listen to the authorities about what you should do and where you should go.
 - 2. Prepare for the Shock, Destruction, and Unpleasant Surprises:** As flooding starts to recede, what's left in its wake is often a devastating mess. It can be emotionally shocking to see the state of your home and belongings. Mentally prepare yourself for unpleasant surprises.
 - 3. Deal With Utility Issues First:** After a flood, it's easy to focus on water. However, the hazard potential of utilities means it should be your first concern after returning home. A small failure in your gas system or gas appliances can be a big problem.
 - 4. Don't Enter a Flooded House If the Electricity Is Connected:** You could get electrocuted from floodwaters if they're in contact with an electrical source like a live wire. The only way to be certain that there's no electric current entering your house is to have the electric meter box removed by a professional electrician or your electric company.
 - 5. Stop the Ongoing Flow of Floodwaters:** After it's safe to do so, immediately address any ongoing flooding. Any flooding you're able to stop now is less cleanup you'll face later.
 - 6. Get the Water out of Your House:** When it comes to standing water, speed is critical to reducing property damage and minimizing mold growth. A sump pump can do the bulk of the work for you, removing more than 2,000 gallons of water per hour.
 - 7. Disinfect and Dehumidify:** Disinfecting is an important step to improving the health of your home and stopping the incubation of mold spores. The dehumidification process will reduce the moisture in the air and draw out the moisture from saturated surfaces for a more permanent solution.
 - 8. Look for Structural Problems:** Look for problems such as warped boards, cracked concrete, sagging floors, or foundation damage. During your cleanup process, you could simultaneously protect it from another flood event. For example, as you're implementing a drainage solution to pull existing floodwaters away from your foundation, you could also be doing the legwork for a more permanent flood mitigation plan.
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