

CLEANING YOUR PROPERTY

Advice for residents

Do not enter a damaged building or structure, unless deemed safe to do so by authorities.

Contact your insurance company directly and take plenty of photos of any property and contents damage before removing and disposing of items.

If removing/moving waste, practice basic hygiene and use appropriate personal protective equipment including dust mask, gloves, covered shoes/boots and full-length clothing cover for arms and legs.

If using disinfectants and/or other cleaners, follow safety advice on labels and do not touch eyes and face.

Be alert to snakes, spiders, rats and other wildlife that may have taken refuge in the building, structure or furniture.

Each area affected by floodwater within the building needs to be cleaned and dried. This includes fridges and cupboards. Wall and floor cavities should be checked for mud, debris and floodwater. If items are not completely dry mould or mildew may develop.

Floodwater may be contaminated with sewage and chemicals. Contact with floodwater can lead skin and stomach infections and other rare but serious conditions such as leptospirosis.

How do I clean my flood affected property?

Each area affected by floodwater within the house needs to be cleaned, including empty refrigerators and cupboards.

Wash mud, dirt and debris from your house with a hose, starting at the highest point and working down to ground level.

Where possible, remove all wet items such as floor coverings, rugs, mats, furniture, bedding, linen and clothing. If floor coverings are removed, thoroughly clean and dry the floor underneath before new material is laid.

Begin drying out the house as soon as floodwaters recede – open doors and windows during dry days, use fans where possible, check for trapped water and mud in wall or floor cavities.

Hard-surfaced floors, walls, benches and sinks should be thoroughly cleaned with hot soapy water and disinfected by wiping or spraying surfaces with a chlorine bleach solution (see below) or a product labelled as a disinfectant. Once disinfected, allow to dry.

Flood-affected mattresses are difficult to treat and may need to be discarded.

Furniture, such as lounge chairs, may be air dried in the sun then sprayed thoroughly with a disinfectant solution. Consult a local furniture renovating company if you are unsure about their condition.

Soft toys should be discarded, solid toys should be washed and then disinfected.

More information to help you clean up your property is available here:

https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/emergency_preparedness/weather/Pages/storms-and-floods.aspx

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