

# FLOOD RE-ENTRY FACT SHEET



## RECOMMENDATIONS IF PROPERTY HAS BEEN FLOODED:

- Floodwaters could contain high levels of bacteria. Don't drink or play in the floodwater.
- Be sure all cuts, scrapes or wounds are covered so to further reduce the chances of becoming infected by floodwaters.
- Animals have also been displaced by floodwaters. They may have taken up residence in your home. Be aware of your surroundings and possible animal intruders when you return.
- Fish kills are naturally occurring and not expected during a flood except in stagnant back water areas when the water is receding or when there is a change in salinity. Call DEQ at 1-888-763-5424 or 225-219-3640 to report fish kills.
- Don't remove unlabeled containers or containers that may contain hazardous material. Call DEQ at 1-888-763-5424 or 225-219-3640 to report environmental concerns.

## SAFE DRIVING:

- Wet roads may cause you to lose control of your vehicle. Do not drive through flowing water.
- Road beds may have been scoured or even washed away during flooding creating unsafe driving conditions.
- Remain aware of road conditions.

## TIPS FOR A SAFE RETURN:

- Wear sturdy clothing and hard-sole shoes when returning home or working around the home.
- Wear appropriate rubber gloves when using household chemicals and cleaners.
- Wear appropriate leather or sturdy gloves when handling outdoor objects.
- Avoid broken glass and other sharp objects.
- Use extreme caution when coming upon any injured animals or pets. If there has been flooding, beware of reptiles, snakes, insects, etc.

- Bring a well supplied first aid kit.
- Bring food and water in anticipation of finding unusable food and water in your home.
- Avoid any contact with any downed electric power lines.
  - Don't go into standing water with downed power lines. Treat all electrical power lines as if they are still energized until it is verified that they are not by a professional responder.
- Open all windows and doors when entering a building that has been flooded or damaged.
- Assess your home for structural damage that may have been caused by falling trees or water. Seek professional help if not sure.
- Be aware of possible combustible or explosive gases - natural gas and other fuel lines may be broken during a flood disaster and highly explosive gas vapors may still be present in many buildings. In addition, methane and other explosive gases may accumulate from decaying materials.
- If you smell gas or hear the sound of escaping gas:
  - Don't smoke, light matches, operate electrical switches, use either cell or conventional telephones, or create any other source of ignition.
  - Leave the building immediately.
  - Leave the door and windows open.
  - Notify local emergency authorities.
  - Don't return to the building until those authorities tell you that you may do so.

## WHEN YOU BEGIN CLEANUP ACTIVITIES AT YOUR HOME, REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING:

- Mixing certain types of household cleaners and disinfectants can produce toxic fumes and result in injury and even death. Do not mix them or use them in any combination.
- Read and follow all label instructions carefully.



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- Provide fresh air by opening windows and doors:
    - Allow adequate time for the area or structure to air out.
    - Remain in a room no longer than necessary.
  - If there is no standing water in the building and it is safe to use electricity:
    - Be sure that before using any electrical appliances, they are properly grounded, and where possible, connected to a ground break equipped electrical source (GFI circuit).
    - Use fans both during and after the use of disinfecting, cleaning, and sanitizing products.
    - Do not overload circuits or extension cords causing an electrical fire.
  - Keep all household products locked, out of sight and out of reach of children. Use child-resistant packaging properly by closing the container securely after each use. Keep items in original containers. Call 1-(800) 222-1222 (Louisiana Poison Control Center, LA only) immediately in case of poisoning.
  - Have safety devices readily available for emergencies such as an A-B-C fire extinguisher.
- Household chemicals, paint, herbicides, pesticides, caustic and flammable liquids (keep these items separated and in their original containers)
  - White goods (refrigerators, washers, dryers, stoves and similar appliances)
  - Electronic appliances (computers, laptops, televisions, stereos, etc.)
  - All other solid, nonhazardous wastes/debris (building materials, furniture, etc.)
- When placing these wastes at curbside for pickup, keep each group separated from the other.

## IF YOU USE A GENERATOR FOR POWER, BE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING:

## RECOMMENDATIONS IF PROPERTY IS CONTAMINATED WITH OIL RESIDUES:

- Avoid bare skin contact with visible oil contamination.
- Avoid areas on your property where the sediment/soil has visible oil contamination.
- Avoid areas where petroleum odors are present.
- Do not allow pets to come into contact with oil contamination.
- If the presence of oil contamination has been verified, homes should not be re-occupied until the potential health hazards have been assessed and remediated, where it is deemed to be necessary.
- Concerned citizens can call Single Point of Contact (SPOC) at 225-219-3640 to report oil or other pollution for assessment.

## PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN ACCUMULATING AND DISPOSING OF DEBRIS AND WASTE:

- Segregate all wastes generated into 5 categories:
  - Vegetative yard waste (tree limbs, leaves, etc.)

- Operate the generator in the manner it was designed by the manufacturer:
- Use appropriate earth grounds and grounding techniques.
  - Do not back feed (connect to existing house wiring).
- Place the generator outdoors to avoid Carbon Monoxide Poisoning - carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas that is produced when any fuel is burned, and it lethal in high concentrations if trapped indoors or confined spaces.
- Do not use fuel-burning devices such as gasoline-powered generators, gasoline-powered pressure washers, camp stoves and lanterns, or charcoal grills indoors, in confined spaces; or, outside your home and within 10 ft. of the windows, doors or other intakes.
- Opening doors and windows or using fans will not prevent CO buildup in the home. Have vents and chimneys checked to assure that debris does not block or impede the exhaust from water heaters and gas furnaces.
- If you start to feel sick, dizzy or weak while using a generator, you must get to fresh air right away. Death or full incapacitation can result quickly from CO poisoning.
- Do not store cans of fuel, flammable liquids or gasses indoors, or next to ignition sources such as operating gas water heaters and stoves.

