

# Be Safe When Returning to Flooded Home

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## Returning Home After the Flood

- If you left home during the storm, return to your home only after local officials have said it is safe to do so.
- Don't drive through flooded areas or standing water. As little as six inches of water can cause you to lose control of your vehicle.
- Don't walk into floodwater, it can be full of chemicals and dangerous debris. Underground or downed power lines can also electrically charge the water.
- When entering your home, do not use matches, lighters, candles or any other flames. Gas may be trapped inside your home. Use a flashlight instead.
- Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water. Turn off the electricity to prevent electric shock if it is safe to do so.

## Water Safety

- Do not drink flood water, use it to wash dishes, brush teeth, or wash/prepare food. Drink clean, safe water.
- Listen for boil water advisories. Local officials will let you know if your water is safe for drinking and bathing.
- During a boil water advisory, use only bottled, boiled, or treated water for drinking, cooking, etc.
- When in doubt, throw it out! Throw away any food and bottled water that comes/may have come into contact with floodwater.

## Call Your Insurance Agent to Start a Claim

- Even if you are not in a declared county, but have flood damage, file a National Flood Insurance Program claim. Flood insurance does not require a disaster declaration.
- Take pictures of the damage in your home and any items that were destroyed for your insurance claim.
- Homeowners may want to temporarily keep items outside of the home until insurance claims can be filed. See [FloodSmart | How to Document Flood](#)



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### [Damage Insurance Claims.](#)

- For more information on your flood insurance claim, view the NFIP Claims Handbook at [FloodSmart | NFIP Claims Handbook](#)

### **Cleaning - Center for Disease Control Guidance**

- According to the CDC floodwaters may carry human and animal waste; household, medical and industrial waste; cancer causing agents; and other waste. Protect yourself from these chemicals by wearing personal protective equipment like gloves, boots, eye protection and an N95 mask if cleaning [mold or other debris](#). Wash work clothes that are possibly contaminated in hot water and detergent before reusing them.
- See [practice safe cleaning](#). Remove and throw out drywall and insulation that may have come in contact with floodwater or sewage. Throw out items that cannot be washed and cleaned with a bleach solution: mattresses, pillows, carpeting, carpet padding, and stuffed toys.
- Save samples of carpeting, wallpaper, furniture upholstery, window treatments and other items where the type and quality of material may impact your insurance claims.
- You may need a permit before starting repairs on your home. Contact your local city or county offices.

### **Other Dangers**

- Be aware that snakes and other animals may be in your house.
- Prevent carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. Use generators or other gasoline-powered machinery outdoors at least 20 feet from any doors, windows, or vents. If you use a pressure washer, be sure to keep the engine outdoors and 20 feet from windows, doors, or vents as well. Never run your car or truck inside a garage that is attached to a house even with the garage door open.
- The initial damage caused by a flood is not the only risk. Standing floodwater can also spread [infectious diseases](#), bring chemical hazards, and cause injuries.

Look for more information on flood recovery at, [Floods | Ready.gov](#), [Flood Safety Tips | NCEH | CDC](#) and for resources visit [Flood Resources - Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear](#).

