

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](#).

