



MEDIA RELEASE

Emergency Management Agency

Ohio Emergency Management Agency • Nancy J. Dragani, Executive Director
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FOR IMMEDIATE

May 13, 2014

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Officials Urge Flood Water Safety Clean Up Tips

(Columbus, OH) – As state and local officials work to identify the impact from the storms Monday night in Northeast Ohio, residents who have to begin clean up today are encouraged to heed the following warnings:

- Avoid areas already flooded, especially if the water is flowing fast. Do not attempt to cross flowing streams. Road beds may be washed out under flood waters. NEVER drive through flooded roadways. **Turn Around Don't Drown™**
- If a bridge or overpass is closed to do not attempt to cross it.
- Don't allow your children to play or swim in flood waters.

Cleanup

- Mold is a likely problem in flooded homes. Mold has the potential to affect the health of all family members. It is important to remove all water and fix any leaks before cleaning. Clean hard surfaces with a solution of bleach and water; make sure to ventilate the area when using chlorine bleach. Wear a filter mask and gloves to avoid contact with the mold. Let the bleach and water sit for 15 minutes and then dry the area thoroughly. Wet, porous materials, such as carpeting, wallboard, insulation, wallpaper and furniture should be discarded because they remain a source of mold growth.
- Use fans and dehumidifiers to air and dry out the home. If the weather permits, open doors and windows.

Food Safety

- Food that comes in contact with flood water can also pose a serious health risk. The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) recommends throwing away any product if there is any doubt about its safety.
- ODH also recommends throwing away home-canned goods if the tops have been exposed to flooding. Food in paper containers, cloth or cardboard packaging that has been exposed to flood water should also be discarded, along with soft drinks and condiments using capped containers.

Water Safety

- Flood water may contain various bacteria, viruses and other infectious organisms that may cause disease. Flood water may also contain fecal material from overflowing sewage systems.

- If you have a private well, run cold water for about 30 minutes to allow the well to recharge naturally. Do not save the water. Have the well disinfected and tested before drinking or using for cooking. If you must use tap water, boil it vigorously for at least one minute. If you cannot boil it, add 16 drops of bleach to each gallon of water. Mix thoroughly and allow to stand for 30 minutes. This method should be used only with water that is clean in appearance and free of odors.
- Don't let children drink or put toys in flood waters. If your child shows any signs or symptoms of illness after being in flood waters such as nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, contact your physician as soon as possible. If you cannot make it to your physician, go to the nearest hospital emergency room.

For additional information on flood safety and other preparedness tips, log onto www.odh.ohio.gov

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