

## Cleaning Indoor Sewage Contamination

Thorough cleaning of indoor sewage contamination is necessary to protect people – especially small children, – from harmful bacteria and viruses. Cleaning should begin as soon as possible to reduce the risk of exposure.

### Cleaning Tips:

- Keep children and pets out of the area until work has been completed.
- Wear rubber gloves and boots.
- Wash your hands thoroughly.
- Discard or launder clothes separately.
- Remove all furniture, loose rugs, and other items from the area. Saturated wall-to-wall carpeting and pad usually cannot be adequately cleaned. They should be removed, wrapped in plastic, and taken to a landfill. If you decide to keep the carpeting, hire a licensed cleaning company to steam clean and disinfect the carpet.
- All hard surfaces, such as linoleum, hardwood floors, concrete, wood moldings, and metal furniture, should be thoroughly cleaned with a bleach solution. (Mix one tablespoon of liquid household bleach into one gallon of water. Let the surface air dry.)
- Upholstered furniture, loose rugs, drapery, and should be professionally cleaned. Notify the cleaner of the problem.
- Remove and replace plaster, plasterboard, and baseboard that have been saturated and are soft to the touch. If the surface is wet, clean as you would a hard surface, but do not saturate the plaster.
- Clean sinks, dishwashers, and other plumbing fixtures that have been affected by the contamination. Use soap and water, and rinse with the bleach solution. (See instructions above.)
- Disinfect mops, brooms, and brushes with the bleach solution.
- Increase air circulation to reduce odors and mold growth open all windows and doors. The use of fans and heaters may speed this process.

### How to Deal With Electric and Gas Utilities

Electrical power and natural gas or propane tanks should be shut off to avoid fire, electrocution, or explosions until it is safe to use them. Use battery powered flashlights and lanterns, rather than candles, gas lanterns, or torches. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open all windows, and leave the house immediately. Notify the gas company, police or fire departments, and do not turn on the lights or do anything that could cause a spark. Avoid any downed power lines, particularly those in water. All electrical equipment and appliances must be

completely dry before returning to service. It is advisable to have a certified electrician check these items if there is any question. Also remember not to operate any gas powered equipment indoors.

### **Hiring a Disaster Restoration Company**

Contact your homeowner's insurance company prior to hiring a disaster restoration company. You can search for local flood assistance or water damage restoration companies online. It is advisable to check for appropriate contracting licenses before hiring.

### **When to see your physician**

It is recommended that workers who are routinely exposed to sewage (such as plumbers, disaster restoration technicians and waste water specialists) consider receiving the Hepatitis A vaccine. Because of the potential for exposure to harmful bacteria or viruses, you should call your healthcare provider if you experience diarrhea, vomiting or fever.