

Recovering From a Basement Flood

Sewer backups can occur when heavy rainfall or snowmelt exceeds the capacity of sewer pipes or when sewer pipes are blocked or broken. If your basement experiences a sewage backup, remember the water could be contaminated. Consider the following tips to protect your health and safety when cleaning up.

Before you begin

- Call SD1 immediately at 859-578-7450, option 2, to report flooding due to a sewage backup.
- Keep your children and pets out of the flooded area.
- Wear rubber boots, gloves and work clothes to minimize skin contact with the flood water, which may be contaminated with sewage.
- Do not eat, drink, smoke or touch your face while in the flooded area.



Dry

- Run your sump pump to get rid of excess water.
- Mop up leftover water into a bucket or floor drain.
- Use fans, dehumidifiers, your furnace or air conditioner, and open windows and doors to circulate air.



Disinfect

- Remove belongings from the flooded basement as soon as possible. Discard anything that can't be sanitized.
- Launder all washable fabric items in hot or warm water with bleach, if possible.
- Scrub down hard surfaces with clean water then with warm soapy water or a solution of 1 cup liquid chlorine bleach diluted in 5 gallons of water.
WARNING: Never mix bleach with any product containing ammonia. The fumes produced are toxic.
- Flush and disinfect floor and sump pump drains with undiluted chlorine bleach.
- Discard and replace any drywall touched by flood water. Some wood paneling may be salvageable if you can clean and dry it without it warping.
- Carpeting that has been under flood water may need discarded. Contact a professional carpet cleaning service for advice.

Sort and sanitize

In general, hard surfaces and items made from plastic, metal, glass, ceramic, wood or concrete can be sanitized and saved. Many items, however, will have to be discarded to prevent the growth of mold, mildew and bacteria.

Discard

- All food and medicines
- Carpets and padding a professional company has deemed unsalvageable
- Mattresses and pillows
- Upholstered furniture
- Pressboard furnishings
- Paper items (bags, boxes, books, photographs, etc.)
- Children's toys, playpens, bottles, blankets, etc.

Save

- Bicycles
- Tools
- Washers and dryers
- Plastic bins
- Solid wood furniture
- Dishes

TVs, computers and other electronics that flood water did not touch can usually be saved, but you must take extra care to avoid electrocution:

- Never touch any electronics, electrical fixtures, telephones or switches while under water.
- Shut off the electricity at the main box before moving or touching electrical equipment.
- Have all electrical equipment, including your furnace, inspected by a qualified service technician before using.

