



KANAWHA-CHARLESTON HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Health Officer

HEALTH OFFICIALS ADVISE RESIDENTS FOR SAFE FLOOD CLEAN-UP

As you begin the task of cleaning up your home and salvaging personal belongings, the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department offers some precautions to help prevent illness.

- "When cleaning up your home, be sure to wear protective clothing such as rubber boots and gloves. Keep your hands away from your mouth and face after handling any materials that have been contaminated by flood water and immediately clean, disinfect and bandage all wounds no matter how small. Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water (preferably hot water) before preparing meals, eating or smoking.
- All floors, walls and ceilings should be hosed down with clean water and scrubbed with a brush or broom in a solution of detergent and hot water, if possible. After scrubbing, use a brush or broom to apply a disinfecting solution made from four tablespoons of laundry bleach per one gallon of clean water.
- Most clothing and furniture can be salvaged if it can be cleaned and disinfected. Commercial cleaning of rugs, draperies and clothing is recommended, if possible. Items cleaned at home should be washed in hot, soapy water, rinsed in clean water and dried in an automatic clothes dryer or in open air and sunshine, where possible. Special care should be given to children beds, cribs, toys, playpens and playthings. Stuffed toys should be discarded since they cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected.
- Furniture made of wood, metal or plastic can usually be salvaged. These items should be cleaned with soap and hot water and allowed to dry in open-air and sunlight. Mattresses and stuffed furniture should be discarded because they cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected.
- Dishes, plates, bowls, pots, pans and other utensils should be washed in hot, soapy water, then rinsed in clean water and disinfected by submerging for at least one minute in a solution of one tablespoon of bleach per one gallon of clean water. Appliances such as refrigerators and stoves, which contain insulation, are not easily cleaned or disinfected. These items should be examined carefully and discarded if the insulation has been contaminated. If they are salvaged, be sure that electrical appliances are dry and in good mechanical condition before using.

For additional help and information on flood clean-up activities, call the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department at 348-8050.

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