

DISASTER QUICK TIPS: BASIC HOME RE-ENTRY

Safety first

Before entering a building that has been flooded, take care to be safe. Watch for loose plaster, drywall, and ceilings that could fall.

Wear sturdy shoes

Cut feet are the most common wound after a disaster.

Use battery-powered lights

Use battery-powered lights or flashlights if you need light for a short time.

Look for fire hazards

Fire is the most common hazard after floods. Look for:

- Broken or leaking gas lines;
- Flooded electrical wires;
- Furnaces and electrical appliances that are under water;
- Items that can catch fire or explode.

Note: MDH has detailed fact sheets on these topics. See back page.

Check for gas leaks

If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise:

- Quickly leave the building;
- Turn off the gas at the outside main valve if you can; and
- Call the gas company from a remote location.

If you turn off the gas for any reason, a professional must turn it back on.

Look for electrical damage

DO NOT step in water:

- If you see sparks, broken or frayed wires;
- Smell burning insulation; or
- To turn off the electricity.

Call an electrician to help.

If you can safely reach the fuse box or circuit breaker, turn off the electricity.

Pump out basement water slowly

Pump floodwater out of a basement slowly. Pump about one-third of the water each day to avoid damage to basement walls. Pressure from water in the soil outside the walls can break walls if you pump too fast.

This information has been excerpted and adapted from a 57-page booklet "Repairing Your Flooded Home," available in two languages:

English: www.redcross.org/www-files/Documents/pdf/Preparedness/file_cont333_lang0_150.pdf

Spanish: www.redcross.org/www-files/Documents/pdf/Preparedness/repairingFloodedHomeSp.pdf



Environmental Health Division
PO Box 64975
625 Robert Street North,
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975

EHD 03/17/09

MDH Environmental Health Contacts:

Asbestos

Asbestos and Lead Compliance: 651-201-4620

Web Site: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/asbestos

Carbon Monoxide and Mold

MDH Indoor Air Quality: 651-201-4601 or 800-798-9050

Email: health.indoorair@state.mn.us

Web Site: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/air

Cleaning Up and Food Safety

MDH Food, Beverage and Lodging: 651-201-4500

Email: health.foodlodging@state.mn.us

Web Site: www.health.state.mn.us/foodsafety

Drinking Water

Public Water

MDH Drinking Water Protection: 651-201-4700

Email: health.drinkingwater@state.mn.us

Web Site: www.health.state.mn.us/water

Wells and Well Water

MDH Well Management: 651-201-4600 or 1-800-383-9808

Email: health.wells@state.mn.us

Web Site: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/wells

MDH Environmental Health Division Emergency Program Contacts:

www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/contactus.htm

MDH Environmental Health Flood information Web site:

www.health.state.mn.us/floods

If you require this document in another format such as large print, Braille, or cassette tape, contact 651-201-5000 or 1-800-657-3908. For deaf or hard of hearing TTY: 651-201-5797



Environmental Health Division
PO Box 64975
625 Robert Street North
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975