



What to do after the flood is over

To the parents of children affected by floods in the Plain Community

Storms and floods can bring extraordinary changes and challenges to your community. Many have been directly affected by the flooding, while others have spent exhausting hours filling sandbags, helping with evacuations, and performing other emergency duties.

Now, as the waters recede, it is time to return home and put lives and affairs back in order. It will be a time of stress for everyone, and the difficulties you encounter can all too easily be compounded by contaminated food and water as well as health issues associated with animals and insects.

The situation will be doubly critical for children. Their routines have been upset, their homes will need cleaning, their belongings may be lost and pets may have died.

Here are some simply-written health and safety tips that you can share with your children:

Returning home

Be careful in your home.

Here are some tips that will help you be safe in your home after a flood:

- **Throw away any of your things that have been in the flood water.** Flood water contains germs and chemicals that can make you sick.
- **ALWAYS WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER AFTER YOU TOUCH FLOOD WATER OR ANYTHING THAT HAS BEEN IN FLOOD WATER.** Tell your parents if you have cuts or scrapes, because flood water can cause open sores to become infected.
- Some people may use a generator to make electricity. **If the adults in your home are using a generator, help them remember to keep it outside at least 25 feet away from the house and away from doors or windows.**
- **If your house has a gas grill, stove, water heater, or furnace, a storm or flood may break gas lines and cause the gas to escape into your home.** Even if the appliances are not working, they can leak a dangerous gas called **methane** that catches fire very easily. You may smell a bad odor or hear a hissing noise. **If you do, tell a grown-up right away.** Help the adults in your home to remember not to strike a match, use a lighter, or try to turn on the stove if you smell or hear leaking gas.
- Gas grills, generators, stoves, or water heaters may work after a flood, but can still leak a dangerous gas called **carbon monoxide** that you cannot see or smell, but that can make you feel sick.

Always tell an adult if you have any of these signs of getting sick from carbon monoxide:

- feeling dizzy, weak, or sick
- throwing up
- having pain in your chest
- feeling confused
- having a headache

If you feel funny at night and cannot wake your parents, go outside into the fresh air. Ask an emergency worker or someone with a telephone to call 9-1-1 right away.