

Clean- up checklist

Once floodwater has receded, it is important to protect your and your family's health by cleaning up thoroughly, particularly in households with vulnerable occupants such as young children and the elderly. The following points give practical advice on how to go about this, room by room.

Before you start:

- Contact your insurance company for advice on how to proceed with cleaning up the damage as you may have to note flood damaged items, take photographs/ video footage and temporarily keep damaged possessions for an insurance claim assessor to inspect.
- Wear rubber gloves, wellies and protective clothing during the clean-up process.
- Remove all soft furnishings and fittings that are damaged beyond repair (if advised by your insurer).
- Get help to move heavy and bulky items such as carpets, mattresses, furniture and white goods.
- Do not use electrical equipment unless they have been checked by a qualified electrician.

Kitchen

- Clean taps with a detergent and hot water and immerse in a solution of disinfectant, at a dilution in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Food preparation surfaces, cupboards, white goods, kitchen equipment, crockery and utensils should be thoroughly washed and then disinfected using a food-safe product such as Milton, Dettol or similar.
- Particular attention should be paid to cleaning and sterilising items used for feeding babies and young children.
- Dispose of all food, including tins, that has come into contact with flood water as it could be contaminated.

Bedrooms

- Clothing, bedding, fabrics, soft toys etc. should be laundered at 60°C or above to destroy pathogenic bacteria.
- Surfaces that babies are likely to have contact with such as cots, changing tables etc should be cleaned with hot water and detergent and, as an additional measure, disinfected.

Living room

- Fabrics, carpets and soft furnishings that you cannot wash will require to be professionally cleaned or disposed of.

Outdoor space

- Replace any drain or trap covers and grates dislodged by flood water.
- Ensure vents on external walls are free of obstruction
- Outdoor areas should not be used for recreational purposes until cleared of excess water
- Paved areas e.g. patios and driveways may require to be power-washed or hosed down
- Take care when assessing damage to glasshouses/greenhouses

General

- Remove as much floodwater and silt from the property as possible. If you have gaps under your downstairs floorboards or a cellar, this may require to be pumped out.
- Wash down all hard surfaces with detergent and hot water several times until visually clean and dry. You may also want to wash over these surfaces using a disinfectant.

- Allow your property and belongings to dry thoroughly, this will help destroy any germs left behind and prevent mould developing.
- If using petrol or diesel generators, dehumidifiers, pressure washers or gas heater in the washing and drying process, always ensure the room/property is well ventilated to prevent the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning from the equipment's exhaust gases.
- Some areas, like those below floorboards, may omit an odour but will not necessarily present a health risk. If the odour persists, further advice can be obtained from your local authority's Environmental Health Department.

Useful contact information

SEPA's Floodline Service

Call: 0345 988 1188

Visit: www.floodlinescotland.org.uk

Scottish Water

Call: 0345 601 8855

Visit: www.scottishwater.co.uk

Scottish Flood Forum

The Scottish Flood Forum is a Scottish based charitable organisation that represents and provides support those who are affected by, or are at risk of, flooding. They are funded by the Scottish Government and can provide advice, help and information on dealing with the effects of flooding.

Call: 01698 839021

Visit: www.scottishfloodforum.org