Flooded Homes

Final Cleanup Instructions and Precautions

The following recommendations should be carried out before you formally occupy your home following a flood:

SAFETY

- Turn off main power switches. Unplug all appliances. Carefully check electric wiring and outlet plugs. Dry off appliances which have been flooded. Have a qualified service man check all appliances before using.
- Check your fuel oil or gas system out thoroughly before you use any of these appliances. If you have L.P., propane, or fuel oil tanks on your property, make sure these are properly secured. Check all lines for breaks or leaks (do not use a flame). Check all pilots and burners for any obstructions and for proper operation. If you have questions, don't gamble – call a repairman. Check pilot lights frequently for a few days to make sure they are continuing to operate.

CLEANUP

- Wear an N-95 mask during clean-up. These can be purchased at any retail store or home improvement center.
- **DO NOT MIX CLEANING PRODUCTS.**
- If there has been a backflow of sewage into the house, wear rubber boots and waterproof gloves during cleanup.
- Until the waters recede, try to limit the amount of water you use until you can inspect your sewage system outlet tile. Contact a septic tank technician to see if your septic tank should be pumped.
- Walls, hard-surfaced floors, and many other household surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected with a solution of **¼ cup of household bleach to one gallon of water.**
- Tackle one room at a time. A two bucket approach is most efficient - use one bucket for the cleaning solution and one for the rinsing.
- Periodically recheck areas of the home that have been cleaned to be sure mold/mildew is not returning. It may be necessary to clean an area more than once to prevent the mold from returning.
- Dry out your home as soon as possible. Lower the humidity in your home. If weather permits, open windows and doors of the house to aid in the drying-out process. Use fans and dehumidifiers to remove excess moisture.

- Scrub everything in your home that has come into contact with flood waters.
- Carpets and rugs must be removed. You will find much silt on the floor and in your padding beneath the carpet. In most cases the padding must be discarded. Before removing your carpet or rug, scrub with a mild detergent solution. It is very difficult to clean a carpet once it is removed. Try to avoid injuring the fabric or color. Finally, consult with a reputable carpet cleaner. If you do not remove your carpets or rugs, your house will not be clean.
- We suggest your good curtains and draperies be cared for by a dry cleaner.
- For items that cannot be washed or dry cleaned, such as mattresses and upholstered furniture, air dry them in the sun and then spray thoroughly with a disinfectant.
- Remove and discard contaminated household materials that cannot be disinfected, such as wall coverings, cloth, rugs, and drywall
- Pump the basement dry and clean our debris once the flood waters have receded below the basement level.

WELLS and PONDS

- **IF YOU HAVE A WELL** and suspect that it has been contaminated, have the well disinfected and tested. Call the Health Department if you have questions concerning the need for your well to be tested and schedule an appointment.
- **IF YOU HAVE A POND** that you use for drinking water and you suspect the pond has been contaminated, contact a service provider to check your disinfection system. It is recommended that the flow of the pump be reduced to increase the amount of time the water is in contact with the disinfectant.