



### **Things to Do If Your Home was Flooded**

1) **Be safe** at all times. If your home has standing water and your power is on, walking in that water could be very dangerous. If the water in your home has drained through the floor drains and you are able to go in and assess the damage for yourself, protect yourself with an N-95 mask, rubber boots, and gloves. **These protective measures should be used at all times** as you work through the remaining steps in this document.

- \* If electric meter is removed and lock out tag is on, electrical service has been disconnected from your home.
- \* If gas valve is turned perpendicular to gas line and lock out tag is on, gas service has been turned off to your home.

2) **Remove all wet items** from your home as soon as it is safe to do so. Carpet, furniture, cardboard boxes with stored items - everything **MUST** be removed in order to clean and sanitize against mold. Mold can begin to grow in your home in the first 48 hours following a flood. By removing everything as quickly as possible you begin the drying out process. You will have to decide what items are salvageable and what items are not. It might be a good idea to take pictures of the items you are removing that are damaged or not salvageable for insurance purposes or other disaster assistance that might come long after the flooding.

3) **Remove wet drywall and/or paneling and wet insulation** from finished areas in your home. Cut above the waterline as water will be drawn into insulation and soak higher than the flood line. Haul it out of your home using contractor bags, buckets, whatever you have at your disposal. Be mindful of areas where water may be trapped like under your stairway, walls built out for drywall, or under a subfloor (like a landing). There are numerous videos on YouTube that can help guide you in this process.

- \* Remove all exposed fasteners from wood surfaces.
- \* Cut drywall at a consistent height and in a level manner to make installing new drywall easier. Be sure to leave approximately 1" of space between the floor and bottom of new drywall.

4) **Clean and sanitize all surfaces** in your home that were under water during the flooding. This is at least a 2-step process:

\*Scrub floors and walls (especially exposed wood surfaces) with water and a basic detergent (liquid dish soap works well) using scrub brushes or push brooms. Pressure washer may be used when cleaning concrete surfaces (basement walls/garage floors)

\*Sanitize all areas impacted by water using an approved anti-mold chemical. World Renew Disaster Response Services uses a product called "Shockwave" as it is highly effective against mold, but

much safer to use in an enclosed space like a home or basement than bleach or other products. **We DO NOT** recommend using bleach unless you have no other option, and then only in a **well-ventilated** area.

5) **Dry out the air** in your home as soon as possible, using fans, blowers, air-conditioning, and dehumidifiers. Do whatever you can to get drier air inside to prevent mold from growing. **PLEASE keep those fans going 24 hours per day** until your home has completely dried out. Outdoor temperature and humidity levels will either speed up or slow down this drying process.

\* Be mindful of spaces that are hard to circulate air in (crawl spaces, under stairs, underneath landings. Move fans around to these spaces to help circulate air.

### **Rebuilding Considerations**

1) **Restoring electricity** is very important in the process of rebuilding your home. If the electrical panel in your home was submerged, the panel and breakers need to be replaced. You may be able to get temporary electric service set up outside your home as well. Consult an electrician for assistance.

\* If switches and outlets were submerged, they need to be replaced.

2) **Restoring water service** is helpful in the cleaning process and for personal use in unaffected areas of your home. Likely, your service was turned off by the street and hopefully you have a main shutoff valve in your home. You need to ensure no water lines have been broken inside your home before having the water turned back on.

\* You may be able to clean and reuse toilets, tub showers and plumbing fixtures.

\* You may be able to reuse/repair your water softener.

\* Keep debris from going into your floor drains and sump pits as much as possible.

3) **Restoring heating and cooling (HVAC) system** is valuable at this point in time to help circulate air uniformly in your home. If your furnace and air conditioning components were submerged, you should have an HVAC technician assess what should be replaced. You may be able to dry out the fan blower, so it will run and help circulate air. You may not need to replace submerged ductwork; there are cleaning companies that specialize in cleaning/sanitizing ductwork.

4) **Before installing insulation and/or drywall and enclosing walls** ensure that the moisture level in the wood framing/sheathing/concrete block walls is low enough that mold is unlikely to develop. Ideally, dimensional lumber should be at 15% or lower. There are moisture meters that can be used to test.

\* General rule is to wait one week after spraying Shockwave to let everything dry out before reconstructing. During that week, fans, dehumidifiers and AC need to be running at all times. The goal is to get the humidity level to 40-45% in a basement.

**Please reach out and help your neighbors** and help in whatever way you are able to do so safely. We know that God often shows up in these disasters through His people caring for and helping their neighbors.