

# WATER

DAMAGE AND CLEANUP

# GUIDE

*Accutech*

Restoration & Remodeling

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## WATER DAMAGE AND CLEANUP GUIDE

Here in Florida, water is about as common as grass. We have it in the air, on the ground, and even falling from the sky—usually daily. However, our homes are well built to keep the water where it belongs so that we remain safe throughout all of our storms. However, sometimes our homes aren't as well done as they should be. Water can get in from many places and flood through our homes: from the water pipes, storms, and even sewage drains (yuck!)

You may be wondering if there's anything more that you can do beyond using the trusty sponge, mop, and bucket to clean up the water. There definitely is. There are a variety of damages that your home can suffer from thanks to the water that's on your floor, as well as different types of water (and toxicity) that the water on your floor might have. Do you know how to deal with the different types of water?

Or how that water might affect you, for instance? How about the different forms of water damage? You can learn about more inside this guide!





## HOW TO TELL WHAT TYPE OF WATER IS ON YOUR FLOOR

When it comes to cleaning up water from your home, not all water should be treated equally. Some water may be perfectly sanitary while other types of water should be treated with extreme caution. Here, you'll learn about the different types of water, what they look like and how to handle each type.

### Clean Water

A good indication of the type of water you're dealing with is the actual color of the water. If the water is clear, it is usually safe to handle. This type of water may be rainwater or water from a busted pipe. However, you should still use basic safety precautions when dealing with clear water. Now that the water has come in contact with the floor or other parts of your home, it could be contaminated with whatever it has come into contact with. Use common sense measures like washing your hands after cleaning up the water no matter how clean it looks. Clean water should also be dried immediately because even though it is probably clean, any type of moisture can cause water damage and mold growth.



### Grey Water

Grey water may appear cloudy or a bit dirty and is less safe than clean water. This type of water comes from dishwashers, washing machines, sinks and other sources from your home (other than the toilet). Basically, grey water is clean water that has been used. Therefore, grey water is contaminated with whatever it came into contact with like soap or food particles. Like clean water, grey water should be cleaned up immediately, especially since grey water may contain bacteria that will multiply if left stagnant.



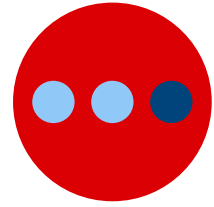
### Black Water

Black water is water that is brown or black. It is very dangerous and should be treated with extreme caution. Also known as sewage or brown water, black water has come into contact with human waste (fecal matter and urine). This means the water may be contaminated with bacteria, viruses and other disease-causing biological contaminants. If you have black water in your home, also known as an unsanitary flood, you should avoid contact and call a professional immediately. Anything that is porous (can absorb water) that is exposed to black water *must* be thrown away. This means drywall, carpet, and so forth.



## How to Tell the Difference

Clean, grey, and black water can be identified a few different ways. One way is a visual inspection. As described above, each type of water is a certain color: clean water is clear; grey water is cloudy or dirty; and black water is black or brown. Another indicator of the type of water you're dealing with is the smell: clean water will not have a smell, while black water certainly will. Basically, the darker the water is, the more dangerous it is. And the more the water smells, the more contaminated it is. Another way to determine the type of water is where the water came from, if known. A leak on a rainy day or water from a busted water supply pipe is clean water. Dirty water from a non-plumbing appliance (like the dishwasher or washing machine) is grey water. And black water is water from the toilet or plumbing system that contains human waste.



## The Best Tools To Have To Clean Water Damage Up

When faced with the task of cleaning up water, you may not know where to begin. Your beautiful home may now look like a swamp and the task of restoring it to normal may even seem impossible to accomplish. But rest assured: you can remove the water from your home and you can prevent water damage. All you need is a few simple tools to get the process started yourself and then have a professional do the rest. They have powerful water extraction tools that will end your water nightmare.



## Health and Safety Tools

Depending on the type of water you're cleaning up, you may need to take extra safety precautions to avoid unsanitary contaminants. So before you even get started, gather these items to help limit your contact with bacteria, fungi, viruses and whole host of other yucky stuff you don't want to touch: rubber or plastic disposable gloves, respirators and protective eyewear. You'll also want to wear clothes that you don't mind throwing away after you are finished. Lastly, you should also keep kids and pets away while cleaning; in this case, a sitter might be the best tool for the job.



## Basic Tools for Excess Water

Once you've stopped the water source (and donned your safety gear), you can begin cleaning up the mess that's left behind. Depending on how much water you are dealing with, you may need to use a cup to scoop up excess water into a bucket and remove it from your home. Once excess water is removed, you can begin drying floors. For your non-carpeted floors, use a mop or old towels. Super absorbent towels work wonders since they absorb much more water than regular towels and are easily wrung out for repeated reuse.



## Tools for Removing Moisture

Next, you'll need fans and/or dehumidifiers. Fans, along with opening windows and doors, get air moving and help your home to dry out if the weather's not too humid outside. A dehumidifier can help you if the air outside is too humid for your home to dry out properly from airing it out. If you have these tools, go ahead and start using them immediately. A professional water removal service will have these tools if you don't, plus more powerful tools to help you get back to normal quicker. A home dehumidifier will work, but not well. Keep that in mind as you're working.

Also, for your carpets, if you don't have a professional extraction tool, you'll need to remove the pads and discard them. There's no way to save them without some way to extract the water rather than drying them. They'll grow mold and then you'll get sick.

## Professional Water Extraction Tools

Once you've removed as much water as you can on your own, it's time to call a professional water removal company. They have powerful tools that will rid your home of all the excess water you can't get out yourself. This is especially important if you have carpet. The best companies will use state-of-the-art technology to get your carpets dry. For example, Accutech uses the Hydro-X Extreme Extractor™ which is 5–6 times faster than conventional drying methods. They are also gentle on your carpet: they can remove water from your carpet and the padding underneath without ripping it up. Without such powerful tools, you will not be able to dry your carpets completely. This leaves you vulnerable to the fast and invasive growth of mold, which is not only gross and smelly, but also a potential health hazard.

## Tools for Measuring Moisture

Once you've removed all visible signs of water and dried out your floors, you might think you've removed all of the water in your home. But, there are additional tests needed to ensure your home is completely dry. This is where moisture meters come in. The best professional water extraction companies will use 3 different meters to measure moisture levels. One meter is for carpets and floors. Another is for baseboards, cabinets, walls and ceilings. The third one is for humidity in the air. These moisture-measuring tools are the final step in making sure water has been removed from your home.



## THE DANGERS OF BLACK WATER

You, of course, know the dangers of sewage. We're all taught at a young age how to use toilets and other sanitary fixtures, to wash our hands after using the bathroom, and otherwise keeping ourselves in a sanitary situation. However, perhaps you're not totally aware of just how dangerous the stuff really is. It's a health hazard for a reason, and municipalities actually found the need to regulate its uses—which means that someone, somewhere, did the unthinkable.

That's why we're writing about it. It may seem redundant or otherwise obvious, but there might be some who don't know about how terrible this stuff really is. You should never use sewage (or "black water") for anything at all. It gets flushed or drained from your home immediately. It's not worth your health to play around with it.

### Pathogens

This is what we're warned about the most when it comes to sewage. The fecal matter and other waste that is in all black water can have serious health risks associated with them. The bacteria (which, thanks to the waste products in the water, have plenty of food to survive) grow and thrive in the water, which can have serious effects. If you're lucky, all of the bacteria in the waste are simple, non-threatening bacteria. However, if you're not, you can get seriously sick.



### Toxic Algal Blooms

These are not the same as the bacteria that we mentioned previously. While they are both microscopic, algae is a phytoplankton which feeds directly on fertilizer. They react like plants do when exposed to that fertilizer—they grow rapidly, creating the "blooms." Not all of the algae are harmful, but some are, and can cause some serious health conditions. They can cause things like diarrhea, upset stomach, memory loss, vomiting, abdominal pain, liver failure, and coma, to name a few. (See why we said this stuff's dangerous?)



### Pharmaceuticals

Thanks to the rapid pollution that certain industries engage in, we're seeing an elevation of pharmaceuticals and other pollutants ending up in our rivers and streams. This is not as big of an immediate problem with flood water or short-term exposure, but it's worth mentioning. There have been studies which have found fish being born with defects and getting cancers at much higher rates when these pharmaceuticals are present. There is nothing to suggest that they wouldn't do the same thing to us.



## Fecal Matter

And, finally, the fecal matter itself. While it is human waste and came from us, it contains the bacteria that's in the wastewater and provides the fuel for the algae previously mentioned. It smells, it's gross, but worst of all, it can worsen any of the other dangers that we mentioned previously.

There is another problem with fecal matter and black water: the dangers it poses to your home. Of course, the primary concern is your health—that's why you should clean it up—but your home can suffer some serious effects, as well. Black water contains nutrients and contaminants that will make that water damage and mold even worse. That's why you need to clean it up as soon as possible.





## THE DANGERS OF GRAY WATER

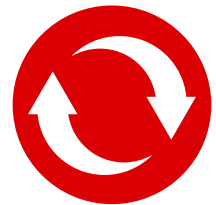
We told you about the dangers of wastewater, of all of the bacteria or algal blooms that can cause you to get seriously sick. However, not all wastewater is equal. Black water is the water that we've discussed before, which contains fecal matter, urine, and other wastes that we know to be toxic. However, we wash dishes and clothes. We brush our teeth, wash our hands, and other forms of cleansing that don't necessarily create contamination.

This is what's known as gray water. Gray water is termed such because pure water is clean and safe, black water (sewage) is dirty and unsafe and gray water is right there inbetween.

There's a big movement currently towards renewable resources and reuse of materials to get the most out of them. It saves money, time, and the environment—all of which makes it better. But there are some concerns about whether or not the water is safe. Gray water is still dirty—and unsafe for human consumption. But, for gardens and other uses that don't involve drinking, it might just be a good idea.

### Recyclable Uses

So long as no chemical cleaners are used in the making of gray water, then it's safe for most uses. The main culprits of gray water contamination that makes it unfit for use are:



- Bleach
- Dye
- Bath Salts
- Cleanser
- Shampoos
- Boron Products

Instead of these, you should use biodegradable, natural soaps and cleansers to maximize the efficiency. It keeps the water cleaner and more reusable, and helps to keep everything clean.

## Cleanup

However, there are things you should know regarding its safety regardless of whether you store for reuse or just end up with a bunch of water all over the floor. Gray water might not have fecal matter (and therefore the algal blooms), but there are still issues with the water. If you're not treating the gray water or there's any form of cross contamination (such as washing dirty cloth diapers), then gray water damage is just as dangerous as black water damage. All of the same bacteria and illnesses can be transferred through it.



And, just like every other kind of water, the damage that it can cause to your home and property are the same. Gray water is touted to have great benefits to irrigation and watering gardens. However, if it can help your roses grow, it can also help mold to grow if it lays around. And, just like rain or flooding, if there's enough of it around it'll cause serious damage to the walls, the carpets, and help rot out any wood structure you happen to have in your home. Clean it up—or get help to clean it up, if you need it.

## Health Effects

Again, we'll reiterate: *gray water is not safe for consumption, and should be treated like black water.* The bacteria contained within are the same as black water, which means the same health effects can come and harm you. If you're going to reuse gray water, there are tons of resources all over the place on how to make sure it stays safe and sanitary enough for you to benefit from its reuse. However, if you're not, be sure to treat it just like black water and keep everything sanitary. The last thing you want to do is harm yourself because you ingested bacteria or viruses from gray water. And if it spills, you need to clean it up quickly. Otherwise, you're going to end up with more problems than just bacteria.



## HEALTH EFFECTS OF FLOODING

According to the CDC, flooding has a great amount of risks—something no one wants to hear when they're standing in a drenched and destroyed home thanks to floodwaters from a storm or an accident. Beyond the destruction of your home that you're already suffering, there are other issues to deal with. Take caution around flooding, and be aware of the other affects of flooding.

### Infectious Diseases

Water is a great breeding ground for bacteria. That's why water filters of all kinds are staples in most kitchens. The same threats that improperly filtered and contaminated drinking water pose are in floodwater, as well—with bigger repercussions in the floodwater thanks to the amount of water. Practice good safety:

#### Wash your hands

The germs that are in the water can lay on toys, carpets, walls, and everywhere the water touched. Wash those hands before you eat, drink, touch your face, or any other contact with an orifice. This will help prevent you from getting sick.

#### Wear gloves while cleaning

This will prevent most of the transmission of the germs to your skin in the first place, and just makes good sense.

#### Don't let your children play in the floodwater

Or with anything that's come in contact with the floodwater, for that matter. That baseball might look fun to a child, but with all the germs it may as well be a weapon.

If you do not follow these simple steps, you may end up with any of the communicable diseases that can be hiding in that floodwater—from diarrhea to much worse. Be extremely careful around flood waters!

Likewise, watch for any open wounds while you're in the floodwater. Just like you can get sick from the floodwater, any open sores that come in contact with the water can get infected, causing you to have to deal with multiple problems. If you notice that the water has come in contact with a wound, clean it and disinfect it immediately. You might be saving yourself some pain and grief later. If your wound does end up becoming infected, seek medical attention immediately! The signs are simple: swelling, redness at the wound, or drainage. If you see them, get help. *Seriously.*

### **Chemical Hazards**

Most people aren't thinking about what might be upriver when they're attempting to clean out their flooded homes. They're more concerned with their flooded home—which is understandable! However, when a flood comes through, it takes anything it can with it, which can include chemicals of all varieties. A bottle of bleach might have been open when the flood came through, and now it's in the water. A chemical plant upstream might have a ruptured tank, leaking those into the environment. Take extreme caution around the flooding—you never know what's in it.

### **Injuries**

There are also injury risks associated with flooding. Like the chemical and infectious disease advice, remember that you do not know what's in the water. If you're wading through your home, you might run into the couch or you might run into broken glass—opening a wound and creating an opportunity for infection! Additionally, there's the chance of drowning, especially if you're caught in the flood itself rather than the aftermath. If the water looks like it's moving, don't get in it! If it's more powerful than it looks, you might end up worse off than your home.



## CLASSES OF WATER DAMAGE

If you have water damage in your home, you're probably certain of what degree your own damage is, whether it's small or large, and how much damage has actually been done. Perhaps you've wondered how the professionals classify it, as well. We do have different classifications of damages to homes so that we know what's necessary in the cleanup efforts. It makes it simpler for us to communicate with each other about it as well as understand quickly what needs to be done—which, when it comes to water damage, is very important!

The class names are easy to understand. There's Class 1, Class 2, Class 3, and—you guessed it—Class 4. They're easy to remember and apply to most of the situations that we deal with in our work. Here are the descriptions:

### CLASS 1

When it comes to Class 1 water damage, this is the easiest cleanup you'll have to deal with in the spectrum. This class is for localized, smaller spots of water damage. With Class 1 damage, you'll not have soaked carpets or too much water in general. Think about if your dishwasher broke and it leaked water over half your kitchen, creating a big mess and dirtying half of the tile floor. You'd need to mop the water up, clean the floors (and perhaps the cabinets if they were affected), and replace the dishwasher. Simple stuff, really—that's why it's called Class 1.

Oftentimes, this level of water damage doesn't require professional assistance. There are few (if any) porous materials, and the water is easily taken care of. We've got a few guides on our blog on how to clean up some Class 1 damage, if you were looking for specific advice. Be careful, of course; water can be hazardous, but this damage shouldn't affect you too much.

### CLASS 2

Here's where we start getting into the more serious water damage. Class 2 Water Damage requires that the entire room is saturated with water and that the water has not wicked up the walls more than 2 feet. In this case, the carpets, furniture, walls, and sometimes even the structural materials in the home is damaged. This requires quite a bit of cleanup as well as specialized equipment to get the water out. You might be able to do it yourself, but not without risking serious damage to your home.





### CLASS 3

This one is the big one. This is water damage that has effected the entire room, ceiling to floor. Everything within the room is saturated, from the subfloor up. The carpets, padding, walls, structural materials, furniture, everything; all of it is damaged. This is the worst type of damage that you'll find out there, and most definitely requires professional help to aid in the cleanup. The requirement for specialized equipment becomes more obvious here, as there's little way to remove all of the water in the home without it. If you have this type of water damage, call a professional immediately.

### CLASS 4

This is for specialty situations regarding water cleanup. While the amount of water may not be as large, the amount of work required is substantially higher because of the special conditions needed to clean these materials up. Class 4 also includes liquids that are more harmful than water, like radiological residues and other controlled and regulated substances. This is the worst damage to clean because it tends to vary from case to case and may be extremely dangerous. Be careful!





## CAUSES OF WATER DAMAGE

No one thinks about water damage until it occurs. And while some causes of water damage are obvious, others are not at all. In fact, there are many things both in and out of the home that can cause water damage, some that you may have never even thought about. That's why it's important to know all the possible causes of water damage in your home. From leaky refrigerators to burst pipes, there are things in your home right now that could become culprits for water damage.

### Plumbing Problems

One of the most common and perhaps the most obvious cause of water damage is plumbing problems. First, there are the overflowing sinks, bathtubs and toilets which are often the result of children flushing toys or other objects or neglecting to turn off a faucet. Then there are the unexpected emergency plumbing problems like burst pipes and sewer backup. All of these can cause large amounts of water to quickly flood your home and cause an array of damage like carpet damage, mold growth and more. Lastly, there is the plumbing leak. Even a steady drip of water from your plumbing can eventually lead to water damage. It's not uncommon to find such leaks at the base of the toilet, underneath sinks or around pipe joints. Over time, your fixtures can break down. Be sure to check them.



### Leaky Appliances

Like a plumbing leak, leaking or malfunctioning appliances can also cause water damage. When you think about it, there are a lot of appliances that use water in your home. All it takes is for one of those water-loving appliances—like hot water heaters, dishwashers, washing machines and refrigerators—to leak and cause damage. In fact, anything that uses water or causes condensation—like an HVAC—is a potential cause of water damage in your home.



### Severe Weather

Another major cause of water damage comes from Mother Nature. Severe weather like hurricanes and tropical storms are known for dumping huge amounts of precipitation which can quickly cause flooding that leads to water damage. However, even a heavy afternoon rainstorm can cause serious water damage. This is especially true if you have a leaky roof. You should also be wary of flash floods which can wreak havoc on your home. And when the weather drops below freezing, your pipe can also freeze and burst.



## The Unexpected

There are even more causes of water damage which are strange but true. For example, tree roots can burrow into pipes causing major plumbing problems. Squirrels can enter your home and chew through PVC pipes causing flooding. And if you have an aquarium inside, all the water inside will quickly end up on your floor if it ever gets cracked or broken. Let's face it: there are tons of ways that water can find its way into your home and cause damage.

## Inaction

That's right: inaction. The worst thing you can do to your home is to ignore a leak or to not act quickly in the case of flooding. The good news is that you can help prevent water from entering your home in the first place with routine leak inspections, proper maintenance of your plumbing and appliances and preparing for severe weather. Want even better news? You can prevent water damage even if water has already entered your home. The key is act quickly and follow the right steps to deal with your water situation.



## WAYS TO PREVENT WATER DAMAGE

There are many things that can cause water damage in your home, but there are only two ways to prevent water damage. The first is to prevent water from entering your home in the first place; the second is to properly deal with water once it's in your home.

### Preventing Water Emergencies

While nothing you do can guarantee 100% that you'll never have a water emergency, there are many steps you can take to prevent water from entering your home in the first place. Keeping water where it belongs is the most effective way to prevent water damage.

#### Check for Leaks

Routinely check your home for signs of leaks such as water puddles, water stains and drips. Check ceilings, walls and floors. Also check all of the visible plumbing such as under sinks and around the base of your toilet. If you notice a leak, get it taken care of as soon as possible. A leak can slowly cause water damage to your home, or can become a bigger leak later on.

#### Inspect Appliances and Fixtures

Over time, your appliances—like refrigerators, dishwashers and washing machines—may show signs of a leak due to normal wear and tear. Fixtures will also need occasional maintenance as parts wear out.

#### Prepare for Severe Weather

In the case of hurricanes or tropical storms, do your best to prep your home beforehand. Check your roof (which is essential even to prevent water damage from normal rainstorms) and perform other routine preparations like boarding windows and using sandbags to help keep water out. When the weather drops below freezing, take care to keep pipes from freezing. This will prevent your pipes from bursting.

#### Handle Water Emergencies Properly

The other way to prevent water damage is to expect the unexpected. When a water emergency occurs, you must act quickly and appropriately to prevent water damage.



## Understand Your Plumbing

In cases where you need to shut off the water—overflowing toilets, burst pipes, etc.—it’s vital to know how to turn off the water in your home. The faster you turn off the water, the less water you’ll have to clean up and the less chance there will be water damage. \*As an extra safety measure, it may be necessary to also turn off your power if there’s significant flooding in your home.

## Air Out Your Home

In addition to physically removing water as quickly as possible, you should also help pull out moisture by opening windows and doors to allow airflow to the wet areas of your home if the air outside is dry—a rare circumstance in tropical climates. Get the air circulating by turning on fans and help remove moisture with dehumidifiers if it is humid outside. This will help to fully remove moisture from your home after a water emergency, which will help prevent water damage.

## Call A Professional

While you can remove a lot of water yourself, you need to call a professional water removal service to fully extract water from your floors. This is the best way to prevent the growth of mold and mildew and prevent water damage to your home. Today’s professionals have the knowledge and the latest powerful high-tech equipment to remove water and prevent damage. Some companies will also offer post-flood monitoring to ensure your home is completely dry again.







## QUICK TIPS FOR EMERGENCY WATER REMOVAL

If you ever experience an emergency leak or flood, don't panic. By remaining calm and following these simple steps, you can remove the water from your home and prevent water damage. The key is to act fast, remove as much water as you can and contact the right professionals to ensure your home gets back to normal.

### Stop the Water Source

First things first: if water is entering your home, you must first stop the water source. The sooner you do this, the less water you'll have to deal with.

#### Plumbing

If you're having a major plumbing issue like a burst pipe, turn off the water supply to your home. If you're having trouble with a particular appliance or fixture—like a broken toilet or hot water heater—turn off the water to that particular device. Since time is of the essence, it's a good idea to know how to do these things before a water emergency occurs.

#### Weather

If the water is coming from outside—from heavy rains or other types of flooding—do your best to limit the amount of water around your home. Sandbags can be used to create a barrier between your home and the water source. If the problem is a leaky roof, catch the dripping water in buckets and schedule an appointment with a professional to patch your roof as soon as possible.



Note: For safety, it is often a good idea to also turn off the power to your home while dealing with water emergencies. Water and electricity don't mix!

### Remove The Water However Possible

When an emergency leak occurs, it's best to go ahead and call a water-removal expert if the leak is large enough. While you're waiting on them to arrive, though, you can begin removing the water from your home in whatever way is most practical depending on the amount of water you're dealing with:



- Scoop up excess water with cups or buckets
- If possible, move furniture from wet areas
- Dry floors with super absorbent towels

### Get Air Circulating

Even if you remove all of the visible water from your home, the moisture left behind can cause a lot of damage. Excess moisture can ruin your drywall, rot your floors and cause the dangerous growth of mold, mildew and fungi. That's why you need to completely dry out your home after a water emergency. Once you remove the bulk of the water from your home, tackle the moisture that you can't see with these simple steps to promote airflow and remove moisture:

- Open windows and doors
- Turn on fans to promote airflow; OR
- Use a dehumidifier to remove moisture from the air

### Wet Walls and Other Issues

How about now? Carpet is a big concern for you, but don't forget that there are other products that you need to be worried about, such as your drywall. The water will wick up the walls at a rate of about 1 inch per hour, generally. If you don't dry out those walls, then they can grow mold and other contaminants.

Also, remember that the nature of storms and other emergencies is that they're unpredictable. You might end up having a situation where you have power and the ability to run all of the electrical equipment. Sometimes, that's not the case. For instance, during Hurricane Charley the power was out for three days. Only contractors with generators could salvage and restore some of the homes; the rest of the damaged products and decorations had to be removed and replaced. Be careful—everything can get wet, and it all needs dried.



## HOW TO CLEAN UP THAT WATER

You'll need to keep your wits about you. All of the information that's preceded this has told you about the dangers and the perils of water damage and what it can do to your home:

**Black Water**

**Gray Water**

**Class 1-4 Water Damage**

And others, to boot. How would you ever get started with this cleanup? It seems a daunting task, but depending on a couple of factors, it might be something that is super easy and smart to do—saving you a lot of money in the process. Here are a few simple tips.

### What You'll Need

There are a few tools you'll need to attempt this task:

#### A MOP

For the tile floors and other smooth, non-porous surfaces you'll be running into, a mop can solve a myriad of problems.

#### A LARGE FAN

When water has gotten into your fabric products, you'll need to evaporate that water. This is one part of the solution: keeping the air moving will aid in that process.

#### A DEHUMIDIFIER

The second part of the blow-drying procedure. This is important everywhere, but especially so in tropical climates. If the room is filled with water vapor, the problem becomes that the water can't evaporate. Be sure to use a dehumidifier during the process.

#### A WET-VAC

These little gadgets are invaluable when there's a lot of water on the floor. The vacuuming can pull water out of places that you might not even think it possible for the water to get into.

#### PROPS

You'll need something to prop up smaller rugs and other easily waterlogged items so that the air can flow beneath them as well as over them. This aids in the evaporation process.



## The 3 Commandments Of Water Cleanup

There are 3 things you must abide by while you're cleaning up the water that happens to be around you. If you follow these 3 things, you will come out of the cleanup procedure alive and healthy:

### Identify

Don't assume anything about the water that your house is soaked in. The nature of water is that you never quite know what's in the water, whether it's clear or not. Sure, sewage and other smelly substances are obvious, but that's only the tip of the iceberg. Microbes and algal blooms are microscopic and they don't always smell. Likewise, the water you're standing in might be electrified, which would be a truly shocking experience (in all the ways you're thinking). Be careful, and identify possible threats. **Never enter water that you're not sure of what's in it.**

### Remove

Get the water up. Once you've identified the water type and how much damage you're dealing with (using the sections above for assistance if you need it), you can start the removal process. Start airing out, mopping and vacuuming up, and blow drying everything that you can. Clean things as you go and remain vigilant. Things in the water and things in the air can still get you if you're not careful.

### Sanitize

The last part of this is to sanitize everything that touched the water. The biggest hazard is the microbial load of the water and what it's touched. Sometimes it's benign, but unless you're absolutely sure, it's best to assume that the water is more harmful than it looks. Stay safe while you're cleaning up!

### Tactics

The general strategy you'll need to remove the water from your home is fairly simple: remove the source of the flooding, and move methodically across the room, pulling water out of as much as you can in one direction, clearing behind you as you go. It makes it easier to remember where you've cleaned and where you haven't, and also allows you to check for damage as it dries. If you start noticing the signs of damage on the part you cleaned first, you might need to call the professionals then.



**FINALLY**

You must realize that water damage is not the end of the world. It might seem like it but your items can be saved and spared. Your home can be rebuilt. It's a hard cleanup and it's rough, but regardless of the size, it can be conquered. Either you can or the professionals, but either way, it can be fixed somehow. Don't let it get the better of you.

If you're interested in the information that we've compiled, we have all of it and more on our blog, as well as our other social media pages. We're here to help however we can. Please don't forget that!





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