

Prevent injury and illness after the storm

As you begin to recover from the storm, please heed the following important advice. If you have the ability to print and distribute this advice to people who don't have computers or power, please help.

- **Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.** Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that is produced by many types of equipment and is poisonous to breathe. Don't use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline- or charcoal-fueled items inside your home, basement or garage or near a window, door, or vent. Don't run a car or truck inside a garage attached to your house, even if you leave the door open. Don't heat your house with a gas oven. If your carbon monoxide detector sounds, leave your home immediately and call 911. Seek prompt medical attention if you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning and are feeling dizzy, light-headed, or nauseated.
- **Avoid floodwater and mosquitoes.** Follow all warnings about water on roadways. Do not drive vehicles or heavy equipment through water. If you have to work in or near floodwater, wear a life jacket. If you are caught in an area where floodwater is rising, wear a life jacket, or wear or keep at hand some other type of flotation device. Prevent mosquito bites by wearing long pants, socks, and long-sleeved shirts and using insect repellents that contain DEET or Picaridin.
- **Avoid unstable buildings and structures.** Stay away from damaged buildings or structures until they have been examined and certified as safe by a building inspector or other government authority. Leave immediately if you hear shifting or unusual noises that signal that the structure is about to fall.
- **Beware of wild or stray animals.** Avoid wild or stray animals. Call local authorities to handle animals. Get rid of dead animals according to local guidelines.
- **Beware of electrical and fire hazards.** NEVER touch a fallen power line. Call the power company to report fallen power lines. Avoid contact with overhead power lines during cleanup and other activities. If electrical circuits and electrical equipment have gotten wet or are in or near water, turn off the power at the main breaker or fuse on the service panel. Do not turn the power back on until electrical equipment has been inspected by a qualified electrician. Do not burn candles near flammable items or leave the candle unattended. If possible, use flashlights or other battery-operated lights instead of candles.
- **Beware of hazardous materials.** Wear protective clothing and gear (for example, a respirator if needed) when handling hazardous materials. Wash skin that may have come in contact with hazardous chemicals. Contact local authorities if you are not sure about how to handle or get rid of hazardous materials.
- **Clean up and prevent mold growth.** Clean up and dry out the building quickly (within 24 to 48 hours). Open doors and windows. Use fans to dry out the building. To *prevent* mold growth, clean wet items and surfaces with detergent and water. To *remove* mold growth, wear impervious gloves, open windows and doors, and clean with a bleach solution of 1 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water. Throw away porous items (for example, carpet and upholstered furniture) that cannot be dried quickly. Fix any leaks in roofs, walls, or plumbing.

- **Pace yourself and get support.** Be alert to physical and emotional exhaustion or strain. Set priorities for cleanup tasks, and pace the work. Try not to work alone. Don't get exhausted. Ask your family members, friends, or professionals for support. If needed, seek professional help.
- **Prevent musculoskeletal injuries.** Use teams of two or more people to move bulky objects. Avoid lifting any material that weighs more than 50 pounds (per person).
- **Stay cool.** When it's hot, stay in air-conditioned buildings; take breaks in shaded areas or in cool rooms; drink water and nonalcoholic fluids often; wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing; and do outdoor activities during cooler hours.
- **Treat wounds.** Clean out all open wounds and cuts with soap and clean water. Apply an antibiotic ointment. Contact a doctor to find out whether more treatment is needed (such as a tetanus shot). If a wound gets red, swells, or drains, seek immediate medical attention.
- **Wash your hands.** Use soap and water to wash your hands. If water isn't available, you can use alcohol-based products made for washing hands.
- **Wear protective gear for cleanup work.** Wear hard hats, goggles, heavy work gloves, and watertight boots with steel toe and insole (not just steel shank). Wear earplugs or protective headphones to reduce risk from equipment noise.

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