

Going Home To The New Orleans Area?

The terrible winds of Hurricane Katrina and the flooding of New Orleans and the surrounding communities have made a horrible mess of the communities that we know and love.

While going home is usually something to look forward to, **this time will be very different.**

Be Prepared...

- ...for fallen trees.
- ...for bushes, shrubs and grass that are brown and shriveled.
- ...for cars that are destroyed or flipped over.
- ...for homes with broken windows, walls or roofs.
- ...for a bad smell in the air.
- ...for TVs, stereos and computers that are broken and ruined.
- ...for walls, ceiling and furniture covered with mold.

Be Prepared...

Your neighborhood won't look the same as when you left it.

Be Prepared...

You might see treasured items ruined by the water and mud.

Be Prepared...

The writing you see on the front of your home with the big X in the middle was put there by rescuers checking your home to see if you and your family were trapped by the flood!

Be Prepared...

Bring company, don't go alone, travel with family or friends.

Bring lots of bottled water and something to eat.

Wash hands with soap and bottled water or waterless hand cleaner before eating or drinking.

- Wear heavy gloves if you are going to clear debris or handle anything from inside your home.
- Wear a disposable paper mask if possible
- Wear sturdy boots and avoid contact with flood water, mud or other materials made wet from flood waters.
- Bring old clothes and shoes that you can throw away if they get all muddy and bring a second set of clothes to change into.
- Move carefully and slowly through your home, the floors, walls and stairs may have been weakened by the flooding.
- Don't operate a portable generator inside your home.

Be Prepared...

Despite the heroic efforts of you, your neighbors and rescuers, many pets and other animals died in the flood. You might see and smell their remains.

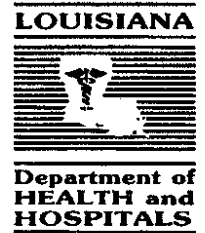


**Be Prepared...to feel sad, stressed or angry about what has happened to you.
You are not alone. Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**



Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
GOVERNOR

STATE OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HOSPITALS



Frederick P. Cerise, M.D., M.P.H.
SECRETARY

Indoor MOLD and MILDEW After Hurricane Katrina

People at Greatest Risk for Health Effects from Mold:

- People with asthma, allergies, or other breathing conditions may be more sensitive to mold.
- People with immune suppression (such as people with HIV infection, cancer patients taking chemotherapy, and people who have received an organ transplant) are more susceptible to mold infections.
- If you or your family members have health problems after exposure to mold, contact your doctor or other health care provider.

Possible Health Effects of Mold Exposure:

- People allergic to mold may have a stuffy nose, irritated eyes, wheezing, or skin irritation, difficulty breathing and shortness of breath.
- People with weakened immune systems and with chronic lung diseases, such as obstructive lung disease, may develop mold infections in their lungs.

Recognizing Mold:

You may recognize mold by:

- Sight (Are the walls and ceiling discolored, or do they show signs of mold growth or water damage?)
- Smell (Do you smell a bad odor, such as a musty, earthy smell or a foul stench?)
- Moldy smells are a sign of molds and mildews, even if you cannot see them. If a building smells moldy, check for hidden molds and moisture

Cleaning Up Mold and Mildew:

Mold and mildew readily grow in damp conditions, particularly in wet areas. Wet materials must be removed and the building dried completely.

- Remove standing water. Clean up and dry out the building as soon as possible. Open doors and windows. Where possible, use fans to dry out the building.

- If your home has been flooded, it may be contaminated with mold. Consider wearing a N95 designated facemask, rubber boots, rubber gloves and goggles inside your home when working with moldy materials.
- **When in doubt, take it out!** Remove and throw away all porous items that have been wet. These items can remain a source of mold growth and should be removed from the home.
- Remove and throw away all wet carpet and padding.
- Bedding, mattresses, pillows, and upholstered furniture that are wet should be removed and thrown away. Launder all other clothing, sheets, and towels in hot soapy water.
- Remove all wet sheetrock, paneling, fiberglass or cellulose insulation and other porous wallboards. Remove at least 12 inches of wallboard above the water line or the damp area because of "wicking" of water up the walls. Clean wall studs after removing wallboards and allow studs to dry completely.
- Wash non-porous materials with soap and water and a stiff brush followed by a solution of chlorine bleach and water. Nonporous materials include tile floors, countertops, metal objects, plastic, glass and other hard nonabsorbent materials. Concrete and brick surfaces may also be cleaned this way. Dry completely.
- Remove mold growth from hard surfaces with soap and water, and disinfect with a bleach solution of 1 to 2 cups of bleach in 1 gallon of water. Repeat clean up and removal procedures as needed.
 - Never mix bleach with ammonia. Mixing bleach and ammonia can produce dangerous, toxic fumes.
 - Open windows and doors to provide fresh air and ventilate the area.
 - Wear non-porous gloves and protective eye wear.
- Materials that cannot be effectively cleaned and dried should be placed in plastic garbage bags for disposal.
- Valuable items such as books, wood furniture, or papers should be discarded if it cannot be cleaned. Saving damaged items may require hiring professionals such as conservators who are familiar with cleaning and restoration techniques.
- Check your air conditioning and heating systems for damage. Discard wet or water-damaged filters. You may need to hire a professional to inspect your system or to clean vents and air ducts.
- High humidity can cause mold growth even in areas not directly in contact with floodwaters. Mold may be behind furniture, under carpeting, under wood floors, behind and under cabinets, in closets and attics or in between walls.
- Contact a professional mold remediation consultant for further advice.

For more information, visit <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/diseasters/floods> or call the Louisiana Department of Health & Hospitals at 1-888-293-7020.