

The Post Rock Connection
Post Rock Extension District #1 Family and Consumer Sciences Column
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By Brenda Langdon, Family Resource Management Agent

Storm Damage Cleanup

Those involved in cleanup after a flood need to take precautions for their safety and well-being and protection from contaminated water. Flood water can contain raw sewage, viruses, bacteria and pesticides.

Check to make sure that tetanus shots are up-to-date. Get a booster shot if you have not had a tetanus shot within the past 10 years. Some health departments recommend a booster within five years if you are working in flood water.

Wash with an anti-bacterial soap (Dial for example), and wash clothing in a detergent and disinfectant after working in flood areas.

After a flood, it is important to take every precaution to ensure the safety of your well water. Have the water sampled and tested to ensure it is safe to drink.

Discard all food that came in contact with floodwaters, including canned goods. It is impossible to know if the containers were damaged and the seals compromised.

Discard wooden cutting boards, wooden spoons, plastic utensils, baby bottle nipples and pacifiers. There is no way to safely clean them if they have come in contact with flood waters.

Never enter a building that might have structural damage. Look for signs such as cracks, sagging rooflines, leaning and foundation shifts. Make sure electrical and gas supplies are disconnected and inspected for chemical contamination.

Be alert to possible invasion by snakes, fire ants and other creatures.

Mold problems can result in damage to materials and health. The longer the mold is allowed to grow, the greater the risk and the harder it is to remedy. As soon as the floodwaters recede and it is safe to return, don't delay cleanup and dry out.

If you need to clean mold, follow these steps and refer to EPA guidelines online at www.epa.gov/mold to do it as safely and effectively as you can.

Some fixtures, wiring and appliances such as laundry equipment, dishwashers with replaceable insulation and microwave ovens, may be salvageable. However, they should be inspected by a service professional before use.

Unplug, clean and dry appliances, but do not use them before servicing.

Avoid home repair rip-offs. Each year, hundreds of thousands of consumers report to their state attorney general about home-repair rip-offs. Many disguise themselves as friendly workers, offering you a good deal on repairs in and around your home.

The Post Rock District of K-State Research and Extension serves Jewell, Lincoln, Mitchell, Osborne, and Smith Counties. Contact Brenda at bklangdon@ksu.edu or by calling 785-346-2521. Stay connected with "Post Rock Extension" on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Our website is www.postrock.ksu.edu.



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