

When we evacuate, WE WILL GO TO \_\_\_\_\_  
 We will TELL OUR NEIGHBOR \_\_\_\_\_  
 at (#) \_\_\_\_\_ where we are going.

We will CALL \_\_\_\_\_  
 at (#) \_\_\_\_\_  
 and tell him/her where we are going. (Someone who lives well away from the disaster area.)

We will also say what time we are leaving, how we are traveling and who is traveling with us.

If our family gets separated in a disaster we will each CALL  
 \_\_\_\_\_ at (#) \_\_\_\_\_  
 to let them know we are safe and where we are staying.

Trim closely around each card

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If an evacuation or other emergency separates family and friends, you'll want to find each other. Fill out a card for each close friend and relative. Carry it with you wherever you go.

Our emergency radio broadcast frequency

Parish emergency manager's phone number

Parish Extension office phone number

[www.lsuagcenter.com](http://www.lsuagcenter.com)

## Finding Family and Friends in a Disaster

For the \_\_\_\_\_ Family  
 of \_\_\_\_\_



*We care about you!*

— Fold on this line if the paper is printed on one side

— Cut on this line if the paper is printed front and back

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# Disaster Recovery



## Food Safety: Power Outages & Flooding

The U.S. Department of Agriculture provides these food safety recommendations for those who lost power or suffered flooding in their homes due to a hurricane. Please follow this advice to avoid becoming ill from food involved in power outages or flooding.

### If the Power is Off

- NEVER taste a food to determine its safety!
- DISCARD refrigerated perishable food such as meat, poultry, fish, soft cheeses, milk, eggs, leftovers and deli items after four hours without power.
- If the food in your freezer still contains ice crystals or is at 40° F or below, then the food is SAFE to cook and eat, or refreeze.
- If power has been out for more than 48 hours, do not eat the foods in your freezer.

### If Flooding Has Occurred

- Discard ALL food that came in contact with flood waters, including canned goods.
- Drink only bottled water that has NOT come in contact with flood waters. Discard wooden cutting boards, plastic utensils, baby bottle nipples and pacifiers.
- Thoroughly WASH all metal pans, ceramic dishes and metal utensils that came in contact with flood water with hot soapy water and SANITIZE by boiling them in clean water or by immersing them for 15 minutes in a solution of one teaspoon of chlorine bleach per quart of water.

**When in doubt, throw it out!**

## **SAFETY ADVICE FOR FOODS AND UTENSILS AFFECTED BY FLOODING**

### **THROW AWAY:**

#### **All Canned Foods!**

- Store bought canned goods.
- Home canned foods.
- Preserves sealed with paraffin.
- Opened and unopened jars with waxed cardboard seals such as mayonnaise and salad dressing.

#### **All foods in:**

- Cardboard boxes, paper, foil, cellophane, or cloth.

**All** spices, seasonings, extracts, flour, sugar, grain, coffee and other staples in canisters.

**All** meat, poultry, eggs or fish.

- Fruits and vegetables
- Wooden cutting boards
- Plastic utensils
- Baby bottle nipples and pacifiers.

### **SAVE:**

Canned foods that did not come into contact with flood waters.

- Metal pans
- Ceramic dishes
- Metal utensils

(Wash with hot soapy water and sanitizing by sanitizing by boiling in clean water or by immersing for 15 minutes in a solution of one teaspoon of chlorine bleach per quart of water).

For additional information, call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854).

**Made available by:**

Beth Reames, Ph.D., LDN, RD  
Professor and Extension Specialist

**Visit our Web Site: [www.lsuagcenter.com](http://www.lsuagcenter.com)**

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## Mold Removal Guidelines For Your Flooded Home



A flood-damaged home needs special care to remove mold safely and effectively. Mold begins to grow on materials that stay wet longer than two or three days. The longer mold grows, the greater the health hazard and the

harder it is to control. So, as soon as it is safe to return, don't delay cleanup and dry out.

Take photographs before cleaning up for insurance purposes, and get started. Do not wait for the claims adjuster to see your home before removing wet and moldy materials. Most homeowners' insurance policies do not cover mold damages or cleanup costs, but flood insurance may cover it.

### What Is Mold?

Molds are a type of fungi. They serve as nature's recycler by helping to break down dead materials. Molds produce tiny cells called spores that float and spread easily through the air. Live spores act like seeds, forming new mold growths (colonies) when they find the right conditions – moisture, nutrients (nearly anything organic) and a suitable place to grow. Of these, moisture is the key factor – for growth and for control.

### Mold and Health

Some people are much more sensitive to mold than others, but long-term or heavy exposure is unhealthy for anyone. Mold can trigger allergic reactions and asthma attacks, may lower resistance to illness or have other effects. Young children, the elderly and the ill are most vulnerable. Some molds can make toxins that can be carried in live or dead spores and fragments. "Black mold" is a misleading term since many molds are black.

### Mold Testing and Remediation Services

Mold testing in a home is not usually needed and is rarely useful to answer health concerns. Some insurance companies and legal services may require sampling for evidence. Professional mold remediation contractors may test before and after cleanup to measure the cleanup's effectiveness.

If you hire a contractor to remove mold, seek a licensed mold remediation contractor with special training and equipment such as HEPA vacuums and dehumidi-

fiers. Get in writing the cost, methods and steps to be used. Compare their procedures with the do-it-yourself guidelines below and to EPA's *Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings* available online at [www.epa.gov/mold](http://www.epa.gov/mold). Also, review the CDC's *Mold Prevention Strategies and Possible Health Effects in the Aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita* available online at [www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/mold/report/](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/mold/report/).

### Do-It-Yourself Mold Cleanup Steps

Follow these guidelines, and also refer to the EPA publication, *A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture and Your Home*, at [www.epa.gov/mold](http://www.epa.gov/mold).

- 1. Wear protective gear during cleanup.** People are mainly exposed to mold by breathing spores and skin contact. Wear gloves, goggles and a respirator rated N-95 or higher. Some types have valves to make it easier to breathe. A properly fitted half-face or full-face respirator with filter cartridges provides greater protection and comfort than the dust mask types.
- 2. Isolate work area and ventilate to outdoors.** Disturbing mold colonies during cleanup can cause a huge release of spores into the air, so seal off the moldy areas from the rest of the house. Open windows, and don't run the central air system during cleanup. Tape plastic over air grilles, and drape plastic in the stairwell if the second story is dry and clean. If power is on, put a box fan in a window to blow out and exhaust mold-filled air to the outdoors.
- 3. Remove moldy, porous materials.** Porous moldy or sewage-contaminated materials should be removed, put in plastic bags if possible and thrown away. To reduce the release and spread of mold spores, it is helpful to cover moldy material with plastic sheeting before removing it.

- Remove all flooded carpeting, upholstery, fabrics and mattresses right away. It's best to discard them, but if you hope to salvage a valuable item, have it cleaned, disinfected and dried quickly outside the home. Never reuse flooded padding.



- Remove all wet fibrous insulation, even if wallboard appears to be dry. Wet insulation will stay wet far too long, leading to the growth of hidden unhealthy mold and decay fungi inside the walls. Cut wall covering above the level that was wet; water can wick up above the flood level.
- Remove all moldy, porous materials, including gypsum wallboard, processed wood products, ceiling tiles and paper products.
- Clean and sanitize plaster, wood paneling and nonpaper-faced gypsum board walls that dried, are in good condition and have no insulation in the wall. It's best to remove multiple layers of paint on old plaster to aid drying. There is a risk of mold on the backside, however, that can release spores into the home through air leaks in the walls. If you choose to restore these materials, seal interior gaps with caulk.
- Remove all vinyl wallpaper, flooring and any other materials that hamper drying of framing toward the interior space. All interior side plastic sheeting or foil-faced insulation should be removed.

**4. Clean and disinfect.** Surface mold can be effectively cleaned from nonporous materials such as hard plastic, concrete, glass and metal; solid wood can also be cleaned since mold cannot penetrate solid wood but grows only on the surface. Cleaning should remove, not just kill, the mold, because dead spores can still cause health problems.

After cleaning, you may choose to use a disinfectant to kill any mold missed by the cleaning. If there was sewage contamination, disinfection is a must. If you disinfect, follow label directions and warnings, handle carefully, wear rubber gloves, and never mix bleach with ammonia or acids. Many disinfectants, including bleach, can kill molds but do not prevent regrowth of new colonies.

- Remove any sediment. Hose out opened wall cavities, if necessary.
- Wash dirty or moldy materials with nonphosphate all-purpose cleaners, because phosphate residue is mold food. Rough surfaces may need to be scrubbed. Rinse, but avoid pressure spray that can force water into materials.
- Use a HEPA filtered vacuum (not a regular vacuum) to remove dust and mold residue, if possible.
- Disinfect wall cavities and other materials after cleaning to kill any remaining fungi and bacteria.

Soil can make some disinfectants, including bleach, less effective. On colorfast, nonmetal surfaces, you can disinfect with a solution of ½-1 cup household chlorine bleach per gallon of water. Do not use in the air conditioning system. You can use milder, less corrosive disinfectants, such as alcohols, phenolics and hydrogen peroxide on materials that may be damaged by bleach.

- 5. Consider a borate treatment to resist termites, decay and mold.** Solutions that penetrate wood over time are more expensive but offer better protection. Other mold inhibitors such as latex zinc paints and fungicides also may help inhibit mold regrowth during drying. Do NOT apply sealants that can impair drying. Framing materials that are difficult to clean or remove (such as "blackboard," OSB sheathing, rough surfaces, etc.) can be painted with latex paint to "encapsulate" any remaining mold and prevent its release to the air.
- 6. Flush the air.** After cleaning and disinfecting, air out the building. Use fans in windows to pull mold spores to the outdoors.
- 7. Speed dry.** Dry all wet materials as quickly as possible. Close windows and air condition or heat, run fans and use a dehumidifier, if possible. If there is no power, keep windows open.
- 8. Remain on Mold Alert.** Continue looking for signs of moisture or new mold growth. New mold can form in as little as 2-3 days if materials stay wet. Wood and other materials that may look dry can still be wet enough to support new growth. If mold returns, repeat cleaning and, if possible, use speed drying equipment and moisture meters. Regrowth may signal that the material was not dry enough or should be removed.
- 9. Do not attempt restoration until all materials have dried completely.** Wood moisture content should be less than 20 percent. Do NOT use vinyl wallpaper, oil-based paint or other interior finishes that block drying to the inside.
- 10. Restore with flood-resistant materials.** If possible, "wet floodproof" your home so it can better withstand a flood. Use closed-cell spray foam insulation in walls, or rigid foam insulating sheathing that does not absorb water. Choose solid wood or water-resistant composite materials. Elevate wiring and equipment. Consider removable, cleanable wainscoting or paneling. Use paperless drywall that does not provide a food source for mold. Use restorable flooring such as ceramic tile, solid wood, stained concrete, etc.

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# Using Sandbags for Flood Protection



Sandbags can be used to fill gaps in a permanent protection system, to raise an existing levee or to build a complete emergency levee.



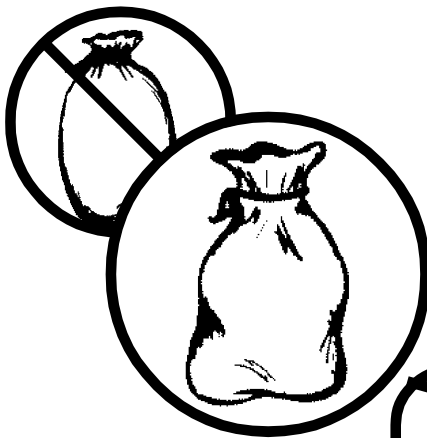
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Sandbags alone, when filled and stacked properly, can hold back floodwater, but they are most effective when used with polyethylene (plastic) sheeting.

The bags may be burlap or plastic. Plastic bags can be reused; burlap bags tend to rot after use.

## Filling

Fill the bags one-half to two-thirds full. The bag, when filled, should lie fairly flat. Over-filled bags are firm and don't nestle into one another; tight bags make for a leaky sandbag wall. Tying is not necessary.



## Cost and Other Considerations

Sandbags are inexpensive and are often provided by a community government free of charge. Filling, carrying and stacking them is hard, time-consuming work. When planning a levee, floodwall or other protection system that involves last-minute activity, think about how much time you have to get ready for the water. Some people have two days; some only two hours.

If you plan to rely on sandbags, stockpile sand on your property. It should be relatively free of gravel and covered to protect it from animals and erosion. If you're depending on the community for sand and sandbags, take your own shovel when you go to the distribution site.

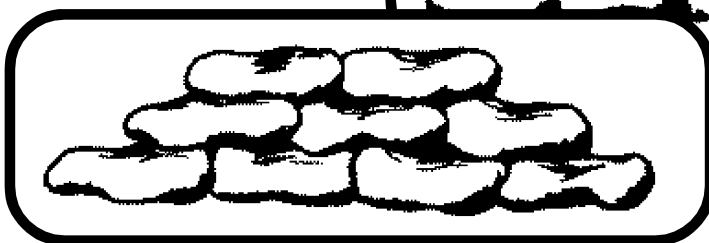
## stacking

Stack sandbags so the seams between bags are staggered. Tuck the top of each bag under so the bag is sealed by its own weight.



## Sandbagging tips:

- Be sure you can install the system in the amount of time you have to prepare for a flood.
- Keep the necessary materials on hand (sand, sandbags, a shovel, stakes, polyethylene sheeting, caulking).
- Polyethylene sheeting will improve the performance of any sandbag barrier.
- When trying to close an opening in a brick floodwall, stuff the grooves with caulking. Cotton caulking, like that used in wooden shipbuilding, will be fairly easy to remove after the flood.
- A permanent or temporary floodwall or levee is not a complete protection system. You must take additional steps to prevent back-flow of floodwater through plumbing.
- Even good systems leak; water seeps in underground; rain may fall inside your barrier. Have a pump to remove this water.
- Before each flood season, have a practice run: find the materials; test the pumps.
- Have an evacuation plan. Decide in advance when you will abandon a flood fight and save your life.

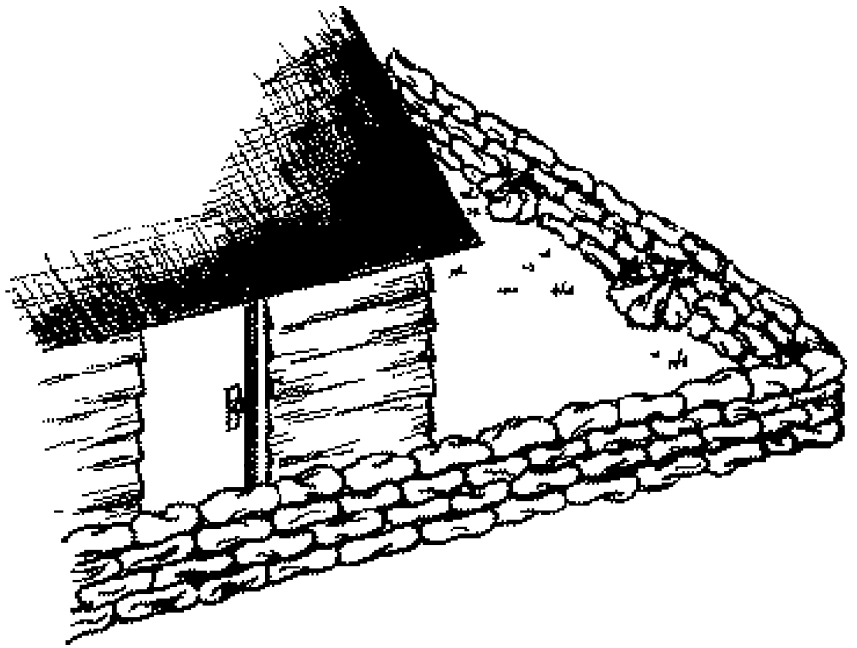


## Short Sandbag Walls

For walls four bags high or less, a simple vertical stack can work. Bolster the wall on the dry side every 5 feet with a cluster of bags or by providing other support. You may use the building to support a short vertical stack.

Vertical stacks are used to block doorways also.

Caulking weep holes on brick veneer buildings can slow the passage of water into a building, but water will pass through the brick itself unless it has been sealed or the building has been wrapped. Blocking doors and weep holes is not a reliable flood protection method.

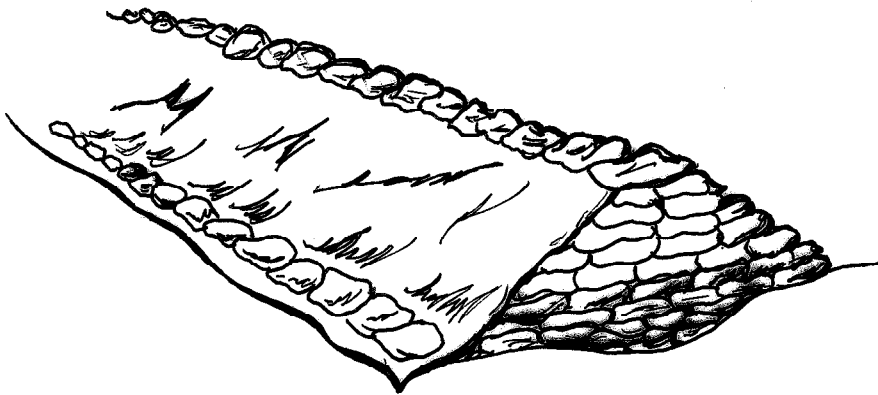


## Sandbag Levees

Where you need protection from water deeper than 2 feet, the stack of sandbags should look more like a levee.

To incorporate 6-mil plastic sheeting into the stack, first lay the sheet along the ground where the outside edge of the sandbag levee will be. It should be 6 mils or heavier, and three times as wide as the intended height of the levee. As you add bags, bring the sheeting up between them in stair-step fashion.

You can add plastic sheeting to the face of a sandbag levee instead of weaving it between the bags (see diagram). In either case, don't stretch the plastic; it should be slack wherever it isn't completely supported by the bags.



A bonding trench will help prevent the levee from sliding.

When blocking an opening, the plastic sheeting should overlap the permanent structure at least 2 feet on each end. Continue the sandbagging a couple of feet beyond the opening in front of a permanent wall or levee to get a good seal.

Additional flood protection and recovery information is available from the parish office of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service or from our web site at [www.louisianafloods.org](http://www.louisianafloods.org).

Extension's flood mitigation work is supported by the Federal Emergency Management Agency through its Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The HMGP is administered in Louisiana by the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness.

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## Using Generators for Electrical Power

### Tips

- Gasoline engines produce carbon monoxide. Don't run them in an enclosed area.
- Check the oil level in the engine before using and on a regular basis (for example when refueling).
- Let the engine cool off before refueling.
- The generator should be kept a safe distance from structures because of engine heat.
- Place the generator on a level surface to keep oil at proper level in engine.
- Water will damage generators as well as produce an electrical hazard, so keep the generator dry.
- A voltage drop may occur if too long an extension cord is connected to the appliance or if one with too small a wire size is used. If the extension cord becomes very warm, it is inadequate.
- Connect the generator directly to the appliance.
- You should not try to hook generators to your electrical supply box.
- Ground the generator as stated in the instructions. If you use an extension cord, use one with a ground plug.
- Have the generator running before the A.C. circuit on the generator is turned on or before you plug in the appliance.
- An appliance that has a heating element, such as a toaster or hair dryer, consumes a large amount of current. It's best to avoid using these types of items.
- If an appliance has gotten wet or damaged, it may not be in good working order. Using the appliance may damage the generator.
- Some generators have the ability to produce 115/120 volts or 220 volts. Select the outlet that corresponds to the voltage requirement of the appliance.

Emergency generators become popular after disasters. They can help save food in freezers and refrigerators, but they also may be dangerous if not used properly.

The capacity of a generator is usually stated in watts. For example, you may have a 2,000-watt generator. This is the same as a 2-kilowatt (K.W.) generator, because 1,000 watts is equal to 1 K.W.

Watts is an electrical term determined by multiplying volts times amps. For example, if an appliance requires 120 volts and uses 10 amps, this appliance requires 1,200 watts. This information is on the nameplate of the appliance. By this formula, you can determine what you can run on your generator. For example, an appliance that requires 1,200 watts and one requiring 600 watts could be run on a 2,000-watt generator. However, appliances with motors require more current to start than they do after they are running. A suggestion is to start a refrigerator, allow it to begin running and then plug in another appliance.



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# Preventing Back-flow

## Using Valves, Plugs, Caps and Seepage Barriers in Flood Protection

When there is more water outside than inside a floodwall, levee or building, water continually tries to get inside.

Obvious paths of intrusion are sewer drains for the bathtub and toilet and drainage tubes in floodwalls and levees. Floor drains in some areas of buildings also could provide such a path.

Any drain with its inside opening below flood level must be blocked. The drains may not be obvious – such as air-conditioning condensate drains – so look carefully.

## Valves

A single valve installed in the main drain line can prevent back-flow through several interior drains.

There are advantages and disadvantages to each of the three valve styles:

**Flap valves** are the least expensive but the most prone to

failure. A bit of trash stuck on the valve gasket can prevent a flap valve from closing completely. The advantage of a flap valve, aside from its lower cost, is that it reduces back-flow without your intervention. A 4-inch PVC flap valve costs about \$40.

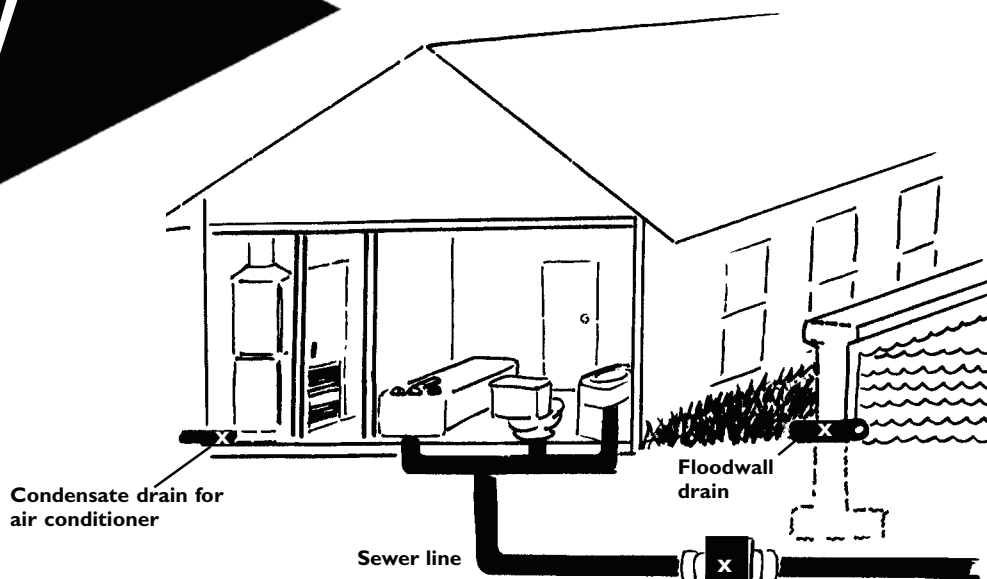
**Gate valves** and **ball valves** normally must be closed by mechanical action but can be automated.





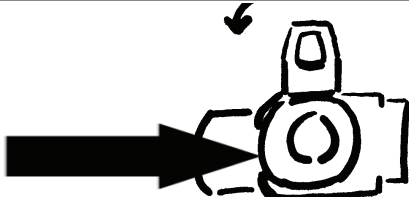
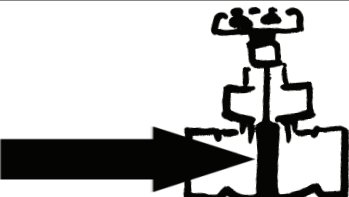
**Ball valves** close by turning the valve handle a quarter turn; this rotates a ball within a drain tube to block flow. A 4-inch PVC ball valve costs about \$85. This valve provides a more positive closure than a flap and it will seal even in the presence of some debris.

**Gate valves** close by turning the handle several complete rotations to slide the gate across the drain tube. Gates provide the tightest closure possible with valves; the metal valve can overcome the resistance of small debris. A manual 4-inch brass gate valve costs around \$110. A hydraulically activated gate valve costs about \$850.

Installing any of these valves in an existing sewer line is equally difficult, since it requires digging up the sewer line. However, the benefits far outweigh the trouble and cost of preventing unhealthy sewage back-flow, even if you don't keep surface flood water out of the building.

It may be beneficial to combine a flap valve (for automatic closure) with a ball or gate valve that requires manual closure but provides a more positive seal.



Flap valve	Ball valve	Gate valve
		
Action required	Quarter turn	Several turns
		
<p>← Normal drain flow      Back-flow →</p>		

# Caps and Plugs for Open-ended Drain Lines

When the outlet of a drain is exposed, as it is with drain tubes through a floodwall or levee, one simple solution to back-flow is to block the line with a threaded or unthreaded cap.



Slip-on cap for bare pipe



Screw cap for threaded pipe

Install caps so water pressure tightens the seal

In a closed sewer system, a valve in the outside sewer line should prevent back-flow through tubs, toilets and other plumbed drains inside the building.

If you don't have a valve, or the valve fails, you may be able to block the drain openings inside the building.

To do that, you'll need to access the openings. For a tub or floor drain, that may mean removing the strainer. For a toilet, it means removing the toilet. (Don't forget to turn off the water to the toilet first and disconnect the water inlet to the tank.)

A product sold for plugging drain pipe is a gripper plug. Tightening the screw causes the plug to expand and "grip" the inner wall of the pipe. A 4-inch plug sells for about \$4.



Two styles of gripper plugs for bare pipe



## Seepage

The solution to seepage problems, if you have seepage, is to block underground flow with a barrier that increases the distance water must travel through the ground to get past your barrier.

Most Louisiana soils have more than 30 percent clay content, so seepage is not a significant problem for floods shorter than two days.

However, if the soil was imported for construction of the building, the rate of seepage should be determined. This is done using the percolation test commonly used to determine whether a septic system will drain properly.

## Tips

- Prevent sewage back-flow with a valve installed in the main sewer line.
- For back-flow protection without human intervention, use a flap valve. Back it up with a positively sealing ball valve, gate valve or plug. More elaborate valve systems are available.
- Caps or plugs may be used instead of valves on exposed storm drains to prevent back-flow. Flow is blocked in both directions.
- On open-ended drain tubes, keep valve gaskets, cap seats and threads clean so they will function properly. Know where removable caps are kept.
- In an emergency, prevent sewer back-flow by stuffing a plastic bag full of rags into the sewer pipe at the clean-out.
- Never use pumps and barriers to create a water-level difference of more than 3 feet without proper design by a competent professional.

Visit our website: [www.agctr.lsu.edu](http://www.agctr.lsu.edu)

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## Filing Insurance Claims

The following steps should be taken to file an insurance claim for disaster damage to your home or property.

### Tips

- ▶ Call your insurance agent immediately. Find out:
  - Whether the damage is covered under the terms of your policy.
  - How long you have to file a claim.
  - Whether your claim exceeds your policy's deductible.
  - How long it will take to process the claim.
  - If you will need estimates for repairs.
- ▶ Keep a record of all calls, including person's name and the date and time of the call.
- ▶ It's important to follow up on your call with a letter detailing the problem. Keep a copy of the letter.
- ▶ Begin cleanup and salvage as soon as possible. Don't wait for the insurance agent or adjuster. But do take photos or video BEFORE any cleanup for use as an inventory.
- ▶ Keep damaged materials for proof of loss.
- ▶ Leave phone number or e-mail where you can be reached when the insurance adjuster arrives.
- ▶ The adjuster will assess the damages to the home. The owner should sign proof-of-loss statement. Additional damage can be added when found.
- ▶ If your property is looted, contact the police immediately. Tell them what was stolen. This report may be needed to file an insurance claim for theft, distinct from the disaster damage claim.
- ▶ Protect your property from further damage by making temporary repairs. Save receipts for reimbursement.
- ▶ If your home is uninhabitable, save all receipts relating to your temporary lodging and food. Other items typically covered include telephone or utility installation costs in a temporary residence, and extra transportation costs.
- ▶ Make a detailed list of damaged articles. Include description of the item, approximate date of purchase and what it would cost to replace or repair. Don't forget to include the contents of closets, drawers and garages/carports.

- ▶ Provide any information the adjuster requests to process your claim. Keep a copy of all information for your own records.
- ▶ Review the settlement steps outlined in your policy. If you are offered an on-the-spot settlement, you can accept the check right away. Later on, if you find other damage, you can "reopen" the claim and file for an additional amount. Most policies require claims to be filed within one year of the disaster.
- ▶ If you're dissatisfied with the proposed settlement offer, contact your agent or your insurance company's claims department manager. Make sure you have figures to back up your claim for more money. If you and your insurance company still disagree, most insurance policies allow for an independent appraisal of the loss. In this case, both you and your insurance company hire independent appraisers who choose a mediator. The decision of any two of these people is binding. You and your insurance company each pay your appraiser and share the other costs.
- ▶ Some insurance companies may offer you a slightly different way of settling a dispute called arbitration. When settlement differences are arbitrated, a neutral arbiter hears the arguments of both sides and then makes a final decision.

If you don't know how to contact your insurance agent, the Louisiana Department of Insurance has a list of the major insurance companies operating in Louisiana and contact phone numbers on its Web site [www.lidi.state.la.us](http://www.lidi.state.la.us). If you can't reach your company or if you have problems with your claim, contact the department at 800.259.5300 or 225.342.5900.

After your claim has been settled and the repair work is underway, take time to reevaluate your insurance coverage. For example, was your home or property adequately insured? Did you have replacement cost coverage for your personal property? Talk to your insurance agent or company representative about possible changes.

Build stronger next time. When you are ready to think about rebuilding, carefully consider where



you should rebuild, and then ask your builder about adding features that would increase your home's disaster-resistance.

Building codes require structures to be built to certain minimum standards. In areas likely to be hit by hurricanes, for example, homes must be constructed to withstand high winds. If your home was damaged and was not in compliance with current

building codes, you will likely have to rebuild the damaged sections in accordance with current codes.

In some cases, complying with building codes may require a change in design or building materials and may be more costly. Generally, homeowner's insurance policies do not pay for these extra costs, but some insurance companies offer an endorsement that pays a specified amount toward such change.

Source: Virginia Cooperative Extension and  
Clemson Cooperative Extension  
Originally developed by Ann A. Berry, Ph.D.,  
LSU AgCenter 9/05

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## Nutrition and Fitness: Your Keys to Coping with Stress

When you're under stress, one of your best defenses is good health. To keep your body healthy, a well-balanced diet and a regular program of exercise are essential.

### Eat Right to Cope with Stress

Eating nutritious foods helps your body respond to stressful situations. Eating a variety of foods usually provides the nutrients needed for good health for most people. Choose foods from MyPyramid to get the nutrients your body needs:

- Fruits – fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruits and fruit juices
- Vegetables – fresh, frozen, canned, and dried vegetables and vegetable juices
- Grains – bread, pasta, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas, and grits. At least half of the grain foods should be whole grains.
- Meat and Beans – lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, peanut butter, dry beans, nuts and seeds
- Milk – fluid milk and milk products, such as yogurt and cheese. Choose fat-free or low-fat milk.

Emotional stress and psychological stress usually don't increase your body's nutrient needs above the recommended amounts so you probably won't need any special diet preparations or supplements. If you take a vitamin supplement, be sure to choose one that provides no more than 100% of the recognized nutrients. Remember that very large doses of some vitamins and minerals can be harmful.

- Maintain a regular eating schedule. Irregular eating patterns interfere with the body's ability to cope.
- Avoid meal skipping or skimping. Hungry people lose their ability to concentrate and often respond poorly to stressful situations.
- Try to make mealtimes relaxed and enjoyable. Eat with those you enjoy being with, talk about pleasant topics and plan enough time to eat slowly.

- Satisfy your body's defenses by eating nutritious snacks such as fruit, juice, raw vegetables and milk.
- Avoid high fat and fried foods that may be difficult to digest.
- Drink plenty of water. A good fluid intake helps your body resist the effects of strain.

### *If stress leads you to "binges," try these . . .*

- Take a walk or visit a friend instead of eating.
- Keep nutritious, low fat snacks on hand instead of those high in calories or fat.
- Learn to recognize when you're really hungry, not just needing the security that food often offers.

### *If stress makes you lose your appetite, try these . . .*

- Eat several small meals throughout the day.
- Plan a quiet time before meals to relax and unwind.
- Keep nutritious, easy to eat snacks on hand.



## Exercise Regularly to Cope with Stress

Regular exercise makes you a healthier person with more energy by offering these benefits:

- Improves the heart's efficiency.
- Increases strength and capacity of the lungs.
- Decreases body fat and increases muscle mass.
- Helps control weight.
- Lowers blood pressure.
- Decreases anxiety, tension and depression through production of the body's natural tranquilizers.
- Helps you sleep better.
- Helps prevent constipation.
- Helps combat muscle and joint stiffness.
- Makes your bones stronger.

## What's the best exercise?

For health and longevity, experts recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise most days of the week. Example: walking two miles at a 15-minute-per-mile pace, mowing the lawn with a power mower or playing golf (if carrying clubs).

For aerobic fitness to improve heart and lungs, exercise up to 45 minutes three to five times a week. Examples include brisk walking outside or on a treadmill, bicycling, swimming or running.

You don't need to do all your exercise at one time to get many health benefits. To lower heart rate, blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels, divide your 30 minutes of exercise into three 10-minute sessions a day if this suits your schedule better.

### ***Keep these points in mind when exercising:***

- If you're a man over 40 or a woman over 50, consult your doctor before starting an exercise program.
- Exercise moderately and routinely.
- Increase exercise gradually.
- Warm up before and cool down after exercise.
- Drink plenty of water before, during and after your workout.
- If you stop exercising because of illness, start back slowly.
- Choose an exercise you enjoy and get started.

### **Reference**

USDA MyPyramid website: [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)

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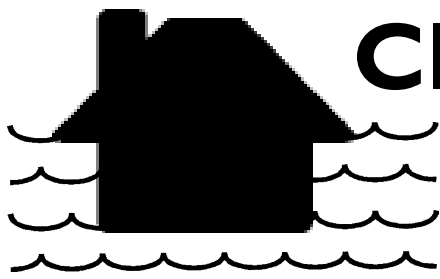
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# Cleaning Flood-damaged Homes



## Caution!

1. Inspect for structural and electrical damage from outside to determine if it is safe to enter.
2. Electrical safety is extremely important in floods. Check for fire hazards and gas leaks. Use battery-powered light sources.
3. Never mix chlorine bleach with ammonia or vinegar.
4. Wear sturdy shoes, rubber gloves and eye protection.
5. Be watchful for fire ants and animals.
6. If mold is present, wear a respirator that can filter spores.

## First Steps

See that everyone is out of danger of new flood crests, fire and falling buildings. Assume floodwater and flooded materials are contaminated.

### Flood Insurance Claims

1. Contact your insurance adjuster immediately.
  - a. Begin cleanup, salvage and drying as soon as possible. Do not wait for adjuster. Take photos for use as an inventory. All steps suggested on this page can be taken before adjuster arrives.
  - b. Clean house so adjuster can see the damage. Keep damaged materials for proof of loss.
  - c. Leave phone number where you can be reached when adjuster arrives.
  - d. Adjuster will assess damages to house. Owner should sign proof of loss statement. Additional damage can be added when found.
2. Contact governmental offices for information.
  - a. Cooperative Extension Service parish office (may be listed as County Agent's Office or LSU AgCenter in parish government section).
  - b. Parish Emergency Management Office; the FEMA TeleRegistration Hotline, 800-621-3362.

### Electrical Systems

3. Be sure all electric and gas services are turned off before entering premises for the first time.
  - a. Disconnect main switch and all circuits.
  - b. Remove covers from all outlets and fuse or breaker boxes and flush with clean water.
  - c. Let dry and spray with contact cleaner/lubricant.
  - d. Have electrician check for grounds and other unsafe conditions before reconnecting system.

### Food and Water Sanitation

4. Until your local water company, utility or public health department declares your water source safe, purify water, not only for drinking and cooking, but also for washing any part of the body or dishes.

- a. Water: Strain water through a clean cloth or filter, then boil water vigorously for a full minute, let cool. If boiling is not possible, use fresh unscented liquid chlorine bleach (16 drops or 1/8 tsp./gallon of clear water; 1/4 tsp./gallon of cloudy water), stir, let stand 30 minutes. Iodine and purification tablets are not recommended.
- b. Food: Because of risk of contamination, discard all foods that came in contact with floodwater, including canned goods. Discard perishable foods that have been above 40 degrees F for more than two hours.
- c. Utensils: Discard flood-contaminated wooden cutting boards and spoons, plastic utensils, baby bottles, nipples and pacifiers. Thoroughly wash metal and ceramic pans, utensils and dishes with hot soapy water and sanitize by boiling them in clean water or by immersing them for 15 minutes in a solution of 1 tsp. chlorine bleach/quart water.

### Furnishings and Carpets

5. Remove all furniture, bedding and carpeting to outdoors to be cleaned and dried (or discarded).
  - a. Flooded carpets and rugs are best replaced since floodwater may contain contaminants. Flooded carpet pads should always be discarded and replaced.
  - b. Remove waterlogged rugs, carpets and pads within 48 hours after flooding subsides.
  - c. If salvage is attempted, spread out rugs and carpets outdoors. Hose off. If soiled, professionally clean or work in carpet shampoo with a broom. Rinse well with solution of 1 gallon water and 2 tablespoons liquid household chlorine bleach to sanitize (if colorfast). If carpet is wool, do not add bleach.
  - d. Dry carpet and subfloor thoroughly as quickly as possible. If carpet is installed damp, it can mildew. Carpet might shrink, but a professional may be able to stretch it.

### Walls\*

6. Open flooded walls, even if they appear undamaged, to prevent mold, odor and structural decay later.
  - a. Remove water from structure as rapidly as possible. Ventilate.
  - b. Remove baseboards and cut holes in wallboard to drain uninsulated walls.
  - c. Remove interior surface of insulated walls to a point above water height. Discard flooded drywall. Undamaged paneling may be propped open or reinstalled after cleaning.
  - d. Remove and discard all wet fibrous insulation.
  - e. Clean out mud. Wall studs and plates may be sprayed with disinfectant (1 cup bleach/gallon water) to kill any existing mold and fungi.
  - f. Speed drying with dehumidifiers and fans.
  - g. Leave walls open until they have thoroughly dried (may take up to a month).

- h. Select replacement materials that will withstand future floods (such as rigid foam insulation, removable wainscoting, ceramic tile, etc.).

## Next Steps

- 7. Long-term flooding or wetness is likely to ruin most interior finishes and contents, but the next steps may be possible when flooding is short term and cleanup begins promptly. **Delay permanent repairs until the building is thoroughly dry** (may take weeks).

### Subfloors

- a. Layers of submerged plywood or OSB subfloors will likely separate or swell. Affected sections must be replaced to keep new floor covering from buckling.
- b. When floor coverings are removed, allow subflooring to dry thoroughly (may take months without dehumidifier). Check for warping before installing new flooring.

### Wood Floors

- c. Carefully remove a board every few feet to reduce buckling caused by swelling. If boards are tongue-and-grooved, consult a carpenter or flooring professional.
- d. Clean and dry floor thoroughly (may take weeks) before replacing boards and attempting repairs.

### Tile and Sheet Flooring

- e. If submerged wood subfloor swells or separates, flooring will need to be removed. (Asbestos tiles should be removed only by a trained professional.)
- f. If subflooring is concrete, removal of floor covering will hasten drying of slab but might not be necessary if it would ruin an otherwise unharmed material.
- g. If water has seeped under loose sections of sheet flooring, remove entire sheet.
- h. Ease of flooring removal depends on type of material and adhesive. Contact a reputable dealer to find out what product and technique (if any) will loosen the adhesive.

## Cleaning Wall Finishes, Woodwork and Floors\*

- 8. To reduce mold and damage, clean and dry as soon as floodwaters recede.
  - a. Use phosphate-free, all-purpose or disinfecting cleaner. Wash from top to bottom. Rinse with clean water.
  - b. One-half cup of household chlorine bleach to a gallon of water can be used on nonmetallic, colorfast surfaces as a disinfectant (to kill surface mold and bacteria) after cleaning, but it will not prevent new mold growth on materials that stay damp.
  - c. Dry thoroughly and quickly. If utilities are on, use air conditioning or heater, fans and a dehumidifier or desiccants to speed drying.

### Appliances and Equipment

- 9. Clean and dry submerged household appliance before starting.
  - a. With electricity or fuel turned off, unplug and open as much as possible to rinse or wipe clean and let dry.
  - b. Tilt to drain and aid quick drying. Three days to a week is necessary for drying.
  - c. Appliance repair professionals should inspect before reconnecting. Many appliances can be saved.

## Furniture

- 10. Take furniture outdoors to clean.
  - a. Brush off mud. All parts (drawers, doors, etc.) should be removed. Remove or cut hole in back to push out stuck drawers and doors. Discard flooded padding.
  - b. Use commercial furniture-cleaning products designed for the type of material. Do not refinish or wax until thoroughly dry.
  - c. Dry slowly out of direct sunlight because sun will warp furniture. It may take several weeks to several months to dry.

## Preventing Mold

- 11. Aggressively control mold in the weeks and months after the flood.
  - a. When power is available, continuously use air conditioning (or heat in winter) plus a dehumidifier, if possible, to remove humidity.
  - b. In an unair-conditioned home, open windows and use fans to circulate air.
  - c. Turn on electric lights in closets, and leave doors open to facilitate drying.
  - d. Try to reduce activities that add moisture to the indoor air, and use exhaust fans when cooking and bathing.

## Removing Mildew from

### Household Articles and Upholstery

- 12. Avoid disturbing and spreading mold spores indoors. Clean mildewed items outdoors. Learn and take precautions to minimize exposure to mold. Visit [www.epa.gov/iaq](http://www.epa.gov/iaq).
  - a. Use a HEPA vacuum, if available, to remove visible mold growth. Discard vacuum bag. Otherwise, wipe with damp paper towels, discard and seal in plastic bags.
  - b. Dry items in the sun if possible.
  - c. Sponge any remaining mildew with thick suds or commercial cleaner designed for the type of material. Wipe with a clean, barely damp cloth.
  - d. Wipe mildew-stained area with cloth dampened with diluted alcohol (1 cup rubbing or denatured alcohol to 1 cup water). Dry thoroughly.

For more information, visit [www.lsuagcenter.com](http://www.lsuagcenter.com). Click on Family and Home or contact your local Cooperative Extension Service office.

\*Do not sand or scrape lead-based paint. Get more information before disturbing old paint. If materials are already moldy before you can begin cleanup, get more information on avoiding mold hazards and recommended removal methods from [www.epa.gov/mold](http://www.epa.gov/mold) or other LSU AgCenter disaster recovery publications.

Prepared by Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service Disaster Preparedness Task Force. Revised by Claudette H. Reichel, Ed.D., Professor and Extension Housing Specialist

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## Replacing Important Papers



After a disaster such as a hurricane, flood or fire, important papers may be destroyed, lost or damaged. Agencies, Web sites and procedures that can help you replace important papers are listed below.

### Birth and Death Certificates

To replace a birth or death certificate for U.S. citizens who were born or died in the United States, visit <http://www.vitalrec.com> or call one of these numbers:

Louisiana, 504-568-5152.

Mississippi, 601-576-7960.

Alabama, 334-206-5418.

For birth records of U.S. citizens born abroad, request a copy of Form FS-240 (Consular Report of Birth Abroad). Contact:

U.S. Department of State  
Passport Services  
Vital Records Section  
1111 19th Street, NW, Suite 510  
Washington DC 20522-1705

[http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first\\_828.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first_828.html)

This address is also used to obtain a "Report of the Death of an American Citizen" who died abroad.

### Citizenship and Naturalization Papers

Obtain Form N-565 from <http://uscis.gov/graphics/forms-fee/forms/n-565.htm>

### Credit Cards

- American Express – call 1-800-528-4800.
- Discover – call 1-800-DISCOVER (8-800-347-2683; TDD/TTY (1-800-347-7449).
- Master Card – contact issuing financial institution or 1-800-MC-ASSIST (1-800-622-7747).
- Visa – contact issuing financial institution or 1-800-847-2911.

### Driver's License or State Identification Card

The quickest way to obtain a duplicate driver's license is to apply in person at any state Office of Motor Vehicle Driver's License Office. You will need to complete an "Application for License or Identification Card," which may be accessed at:

<http://www.dps.state.la.us/omv/forms/2003.pdf>.

### Income Tax Returns

Call the nearest department of the treasury office, IRS office or 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676) and request form 4506 (Request for Copy of Tax Return). To find your local office, go to:

<http://www.irs.gov/localcontacts/index.html>

### Insurance Policies

Contact the agent or company providing the coverage. You may be required to complete a form, pay a fee for duplicate copies or both. The policy number will expedite this request. Consumer contact information for major insurance companies doing business in Louisiana may be accessed at [http://www.idi.state.la.us/whats\\_new/katrinelist.pdf](http://www.idi.state.la.us/whats_new/katrinelist.pdf)

### Marriage License or Divorce Records

- If the marriage or divorce occurred in Orleans Parish, contact:  
Office of Public Health  
Vital Records Registry  
P.O. Box 60630  
New Orleans, LA 70160
- If the marriage or divorce occurred in any other parish, contact the Clerk of Court in the parish where the marriage occurred or where the divorce was filed.
- If the marriage or divorce occurred in another state, contact the National Center for Health Statistics at:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2welcom.htm>



## Military Discharge Papers

Request Standard Form 180 (SF-180) from any office of the Veterans Administration, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Red Cross, a veteran's association or military recruiter. It may also be downloaded from:

[http://www.archives.gov/facilities/mo/st\\_louis/military\\_personnel\\_records/standard\\_form\\_180.html](http://www.archives.gov/facilities/mo/st_louis/military_personnel_records/standard_form_180.html).

Send the completed form to:

National Personnel Records Center  
Military Personnel Records  
9700 Page Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63132-5011

The National Personnel Records Center responds only to mailed or faxed requests. The fax number is 314-801-9195.

To find out if you are eligible for veteran's benefits, how to apply and what it will cost, complete an application form online. Call the VA Health Benefits Service Center toll free at 1-877-222-VETS!

## Mortgage Papers

Contact lending institution.

## Passports

Complete form DS-64 (Statement Regarding Lost or Stolen Passport) available from:

[http://travel.state.gov/passport/lost/us/us\\_848.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/lost/us/us_848.html) and submit to:

U.S. Department of State  
Passport Services  
Consular Lost/Stolen Passport Section  
1111 19th Street, NW, Suite 500  
Washington DC 20036

## Property Deeds

Contact the Clerk of Court in the parish where the property is located.

## Savings Bonds/Notes

Complete Form PDF 1048E (Claim for Lost, Stolen or Destroyed U. S. Savings Bonds) available at:

<http://www.publicdebt.treas.gov/forms/sav1048.pdf> or by calling 304-480-7527.

To replace Series HH/H Bonds, mail the completed form to:

Bureau of the Public Debt  
P.O. Box 7012  
Parkersburg, WV 26106-2188

To replace Series EE/E Bonds, mail the completed form to:

Bureau of the Public Debt  
P.O. Box 7012  
Parkersburg, WV 26106-7012

## Social Security Card

Go to a Social Security Administration Office. Complete form SS-5 (Application for Social Security Card). It can be downloaded at: <http://www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5.html>

For additional help, contact the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213, or write:

Office of Public Inquiries  
Social Security Administration  
Windsor Park Building  
6401 Security Blvd.  
Baltimore, MD 21235

## Vehicle Title

Complete the "Vehicle Application" form available at: <http://www.dps.state.la.us/omv/forms/1799.PDF>. Submit to the address given on the form.

## Wills

Contact the attorney who prepared it. If circumstances have changed, a new will may be appropriate.

### Notes and Disclaimer

At the time of this publication (4/06) all contact information was verified. This information is subject to change.

### Adapted by:

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## Preparing Your Evacuation “Grab and Go” Box



Recent natural disasters have emphasized the importance of emergency preparedness. Everyone should have individual and family evacuation plans in place. Extensive planning should include all members of the family. Keep in mind that an

emergency plan may be different for every family, yet there are common elements. It is critical that each family have a planned evacuation arrangement and an evacuation “to-go” box ready for emergencies.

### Steps to Creating Your “Grab and Go” Box

#### ► Step 1

- Place papers in sealed, waterproof plastic bags.
- Store in a durable, sealed box. (A portable, fireproof and waterproof box or waterproof backpack is recommended.)

#### ► Step 2

Store box/backpack at home in a secure, easily accessible location.

#### ► Step 3

If you must evacuate:

- Grab box and take with you.
- Keep the box with you at all times.
- Do not leave box unattended in your car.

### Your “Grab and Go” Box Should Include:

- ♦ Cash or traveler's checks for several days living expenses.
- ♦ Rolls of quarters.
- ♦ Emergency phone numbers:
  - Doctors, pharmacies.
  - Financial advisors.
  - Clergy.
  - Repair contractors.
  - Family.
- ♦ Copies of important prescriptions:
  - Medicines.
  - Eyeglasses.
- ♦ Copies of children's immunization records.
- ♦ Copies of health, dental, and/or prescription insurance cards or numbers.
- ♦ Copies of auto, flood, renter's or homeowner's insurance policies (at least policy numbers).
- ♦ Insurance company telephone numbers, including local agent and company headquarters.
- ♦ Copies of :
  - Deeds.
  - Titles.
  - Wills and/or trust documents.
  - Durable power of attorney.
  - Healthcare directives.
  - Stock and bond certificates.
  - Recent investment statements.
  - Home inventory.
  - Birth, death, adoption and marriage certificates.
  - Passports and other identity documents.
  - Employee-benefit documents.
  - First two pages of previous year's federal and state income tax returns.
- ♦ Back-up copies of computerized financial records.
- ♦ Keys to safe deposit box.
- ♦ Combination to safe.
- ♦ Negatives for irreplaceable personal photos.
- ♦ Computer user names and passwords.
- ♦ List of numbers:
  - Social Security
  - Bank account
  - Loan
  - Credit card
  - Driver's license
  - Investment account
- ♦ List of debt obligations, due dates and contact information.



It is important to have a safe deposit box to protect your important papers. These boxes are located at local financial institutions. Securing important papers located in a safe deposit box will help to eliminate potential stressful situations if you are unable to take your "grab and go" box with you during a disaster. For added security, it is recommended that original documents, other than wills, be housed in your safe deposit box. For additional security, these documents should be photocopied or digitally scanned and secured with a trusted out-of-state friend or family member.

### **Secure in Your Safe Deposit Box:**

- Copies of will/trust.
- Copies of power of attorney.
- List of insurance policies.
- List of financial account numbers.
- Family birth, marriage and death certificates.
- Adoption papers.
- Citizenship papers.
- Military service records.
- Loan agreements.
- Certificates of deposit.
- Real estate deeds.
- Vehicle titles.
- Mortgage paperwork.
- Stock and bond certificates.
- Inventory of home contents.
- Jewelry/precious metals.
- Employment contracts, business agreements.

### **Inform Others:**

Informing friends and family about your evacuation plan is beneficial in case of injury or if families become separated. Having other people aware of your plan will reduce anxiety during stressful situations. It is also beneficial to prepare an emergency contact card for each family member to keep on their person. This card should contain contact information for all household members, an out-of-town contact and other key emergency and medical providers. A printable form for preparing emergency contact cards can be downloaded at <http://www.redcross.org/prepare/ECCard.pdf>

### **Ask an Out-of-State Friend or Relative to Secure:**

- Paper or digital copies of documents in your "grab and go" box.
- Emergency contact information (including e-mails and cell phone numbers).
- Contact list for heirs and advisers.
- Copies of documents in safe deposit box.

Planning and preparation can prevent the unexpected from becoming a harsh reality. Taking the time prior to the emergency to prepare and organize important papers and documents will save you from unwanted stress and chaos in the case of a disaster.

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