

## STEP FIVE: CLEANING UP – GENERAL



The kind of cleanup you face will depend on the type of natural disaster you survived. Your home and its contents may look beyond hope, but many of your belongings can be restored, whether they were damaged by floodwaters, or smoke and soot. No matter what the disaster, if your house is liveable, the first job is to give the house a thorough cleaning and drying. If you need help in cleaning up, contact a professional listed under “Fire & Water Damage Restoration” in the Yellow Pages.

### GENERAL CLEANING TIPS:

- Tackle one room at a time.
- Use the two-bucket approach: one bucket for cleaning solution and the other for rinse water. Change the rinse water frequently.
- Protect your hands – wear rubber gloves.
- Clean walls from the bottom up so you can easily see where you have already cleaned.
- Follow a three-step process. First, clean the room or item. Second, disinfect it to kill germs and the smell left by floodwaters or smoke. Third, if necessary, get rid of mildew, which shows as fuzzy splotches.

### CAUTIONS:

- Carefully follow directions on cleaning products. When using them, wear rubber gloves and goggles, keep children and pets away, and keep the materials away from flames. Make sure you have proper ventilation.
- Never mix ammonia with bleach or any other cleaning products.
- Do not use bleach on aluminum or linoleum.

**Cleanup Procedures Following a Flood and Important Health-Related Information Link**  
[www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile20.stm](http://www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile20.stm)

