



[After the Flood: Cleaning & Re-opening Requirements for Food Establishments](#)

After a flood, the water supply may be contaminated and this can affect the health of persons living or working in the affected areas. All flood water should be considered contaminated! Food establishments must not re-open until safe water service is restored and the local health department approves re-opening.

ALL PROCEDURES MUST BE COMPLETED WITH POTABLE WATER (water that is safe to drink).
POTABLE WATER MUST ALSO BE USED FOR HAND HYGIENE.

Once floodwaters have receded and it is safe to enter your facility:

1. First CHECK:

1. Safety of structure (follow instructions on any warning sign placed by the building department).
2. Safety and availability of electrical, natural gas, and power supplies.
3. Potable water (water that is safe to drink) supply and sewer system.
4. For presence of rodents, snakes, or insects.
5. With insurance company and/or licensed food salvager for possible recovery of loss.

2. Then REMOVE and DISCARD:

1. Food exposed to flood water or debris.
2. Any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture.
3. Potentially hazardous foods at temperatures in the danger zone: between 41°F and 135°F.
4. Perishable foods (including meat, milk, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers) that have been above 41°F for more than 4 hours due to an electrical outage.
5. Canned foods contaminated by flood or waste water. You cannot ensure that all contaminants can be removed by washing and sanitizing.
6. Food containers with screw caps, snap-lids, crimped caps (soda pop bottles), twist caps, caps that snap-open and home-canned foods that have been contaminated by the flood or waste water.
7. Water and ice in icemakers, coffee makers and soda pop dispensers.
8. Water filters, purifiers, and beverage cartridges attached to equipment — replace with new filters after the cleanup and before beginning operation (this includes coffee makers, ice machines, carbonated beverage machines, etc.).
9. Damaged building items that are contaminated or porous and cannot be cleaned.
10. Frozen food that contains ice crystals and is 41°F or below can be refrozen or cooked unless contaminated by flood or waste water.

3. Then **FLUSH and CLEAR:**

1. All water lines and equipment connected to the main water supply for at least 5 minutes (this includes all sink faucets – both hot and cold water, drink dispensers, ice makers, drinking fountains, hose bibs, etc.).
2. Any blockage of floor sinks and drains.
3. Equipment drain lines (flush from the interior of the equipment).

4. Then **CLEAN and SANITIZE (wear rubber boots, gloves, goggles, coveralls and appropriate respiratory protection):**

1. All sinks before using them.
2. Food contact surfaces, work stations and dining tables.
3. Run the empty dishwasher through the wash-rinse-sanitize cycle at least 3 times before washing dishes and utensils in it.
 1. Consult manufacturer instructions or contact the product representative if further instructions are needed.
 2. For chemical sanitizing machines, use approved test kit to ensure appropriate sanitizer strength has been reached.
 3. For high temperature machines, the hot water temperature must reach 180°F.
4. After completing above step, use the dishwasher to wash and sanitize utensils, dishes, silverware and glassware.
5. Exterior surfaces of equipment and furniture.
6. Interior surfaces of equipment such as refrigerators, sinks, trash containers, etc.
7. All floors, sinks and walls.
8. Run water softeners through a generation cycle.
9. Contact your service technician for the proper flushing and sanitizing of equipment such as dishwashers, water softeners, beverage dispensers and ice machines.

5. Finally, **VERIFY:**

1. Toilets and hand washing stations with soap and paper towels are available.
2. Refrigeration and/or freezer units are capable of maintaining food temperatures at or below 41°F.
3. Hot holding units are capable of maintain food temperatures at or above 135°F.
4. Damaged food has been removed from sale.
5. All food is protected from contamination.
6. Rodent and insect infestations do not exist.

After completing the above procedures, contact your health inspector for a pre-reopening inspection. For more information, please call the Department of Inspections and Appeals at [515-281-6538](tel:515-281-6538).

HOW TO MAKE A SANITIZING SOLUTION

To make a bleach solution of 100 parts-per-million (ppm) chlorine which is suitable for sanitizing all food contact surfaces, canned foods and equipment:

- Use 1 tablespoon (5.25% sodium hypochlorite) bleach for each gallon of water
- 1 tablespoon = 3 teaspoons or ½ fluid ounce

Allow solution to air dry after application.

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