

## 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:

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

### 2. Then REMOVE and DISCARD:

- Food exposed to flood water or debris.
- Any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture.
- Potentially hazardous foods at temperatures in the danger zone: **between 41°F and 135°F**.
- 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.
- Canned foods contaminated by flood or waste water. You cannot ensure that all contaminants can be removed by washing and sanitizing.
- 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.
- Water and ice in icemakers, coffee makers and soda pop dispensers.
- 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.*).
- Damaged building items that are contaminated or porous and cannot be cleaned.
- *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:

- 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.*).
- Any blockage of floor sinks and drains.
- 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):**

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

**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.

**5. Finally, VERIFY:**

- Toilets and hand washing stations with soap and paper towels are available.
- Refrigeration and/or freezer units are capable of maintaining food temperatures **at or below 41°F**.
- Hot holding units are capable of maintain food temperatures **at or above 135°F**.
- Damaged food has been removed from sale.
- All food is protected from contamination.
- 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.**