



Question of the Week

Q. How do I clean up my basement after the flood?

A: After the water/sewage has receded, make certain you've disconnected all electrical equipment. Wear plastic disposable gloves and clothing that can be discarded. Wash down concrete or tile floors with a soap and water solution to remove as much residue as possible. Rinse the walls and floors with clean water. Then disinfect the floors and flooded portions of the walls to at least two feet above the flood line using a chlorine bleach solution. To mix the chlorine solution, use ½ cup of laundry bleach to every 1 gallon of water. Other EPA-approved disinfectants can be used. **Please read the label for proper use and application.** When using bleach or other disinfectants, make sure to open windows and ventilate the work area. Use fans and dehumidifiers to speed the drying of all surfaces to prevent mold and mildew growth. Wallboard and wooden baseboards and paneling that have gotten wet must be removed and discarded. The water they have absorbed could speed the growth of mold and other harmful microorganisms and cause the material to become structurally unsound.

Wash non-porous materials such as dishes, toys, tools, and other household goods in hot, soapy water. Rinse them in a solution of 1 cup of household bleach to one gallon of water and allow them to air dry. Before reinstalling materials such as drywall, wall paneling and carpeting make sure all surfaces are completely dry and mold/mildew-free. In some cases, this may take up to 30 days.

Got questions? UNH Cooperative Extension's Family, Home & Garden Education Center Info Line offers practical help finding answers for your lawn and garden questions. Call toll free at 1-877-398-4769, M-F, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., or e-mail us answers@unh.edu