



AFTER THE STORM FLOOD & SEPTIC TANK SAFETY

Emergency Information: 1-800-342-3557 • floridadisaster.org



If your home is served by a septic tank and your plumbing is slow or sluggish:

- Minimize water use as much as possible. If you use less water, you will increase the chance of not having any septic problems. Avoid using your washing machine by going to a laundromat. Consider using a portable restroom.
- Do not have the septic tank pumped. Exceptionally high-water tables might crush a septic tank that was pumped dry, or it could pop out of the ground. If the main problem is high ground water, pumping the tank will not solve that problem.
- If using your plumbing creates a sanitary problem, such as sewage on top of the ground, consider renting a portable restroom or moving to a new location until conditions improve.
- Do not have the septic tank and drainfield repaired until the ground water has receded below the bottom of the drain field. Often, systems will function properly again when dry conditions return. Any repair must be permitted and inspected by your county health department.

Flooding and electrical outages can affect how a sewer system is working.

By minimizing water use during these times, there will be less of a chance that any sewage issues, including backups into your home, will happen. Every effort should be made to use less water until power and other services have been restored and there is no visible sewage on the ground.

- While pump stations and sewage treatment plants are out of power, avoid adding water to sewer lines. Clogs can happen and cause a backup into your home.
- Report any sewage spills to proper utility authorities for cleanup and sanitation.

If sewage backs up into your house, wear rubber boots and waterproof gloves during cleanup.

- Absorbent household materials such as wall coverings, cloth and drywall, should be removed and discarded since they cannot be properly disinfected.
- Hard-surfaced walls and floors, kitchen counter tops, refrigerators and tables, and areas where children play should be cleaned with soap and water, followed by a disinfecting solution of 1/4 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water.
- All linens and clothing should be cleaned in hot water or dry cleaned, — carpeting should be steam cleaned if not replaced. Loose rugs should be professionally cleaned.
- For larger items like furniture, air dry in the sun, followed by a spray of disinfectant.