

HEALTH AND SAFETY

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE



Updated: 10/2026

BOIL WATER NOTICE



MAKE YOUR WATER SAFE, BOIL IT

- Once the water reaches a rolling boil, let it boil for one minute.
- Boil tap water even if it is filtered.

IF UNABLE TO BOIL, DISINFECT IT

If tap water is CLEAR:

- Use unscented bleach (does not contain added scent).
- Add 1/8 teaspoon (8 drops or about 0.75 milliliters) of unscented household liquid bleach to 1 gallon (16 cups) of water.
- Mix well and wait 30 minutes or more before drinking.

If tap water is CLOUDY:

- Filter water using clean cloth.
- Use unscented bleach (does not contain added scent).
- Add 1/8 teaspoon (8 drops or about 0.75 milliliters) of unscented household liquid bleach to 1 gallon (16 cups) of water. Mix well and wait 30 minutes.
- If the water remains cloudy, add an additional 1/8 teaspoon of bleach. Mix well and wait 30 minutes.
- If still cloudy after the second treatment, dispose of water and start the process over again, OR use bottled water.

Store water in clean, disinfected containers.

PREPARING AND COOKING FOOD

Always use clean or bottled water to:

- Wash all fruits and vegetables before eating.
- Make drinks, such as coffee and tea.

ICE

- Do not use ice from ice trays, ice dispensers, or ice makers. Use only commercially available ice until the Boil Water Notice in your area has been lifted.

BATHING AND BRUSHING TEETH

- Be careful not to swallow any water when bathing or showering.
- Brush teeth with boiled or bottled water.



**CHECK IF A BOIL
WATER NOTICE HAS
BEEN ISSUED IN
YOUR AREA**

ELECTRICAL SAFETY



ELECTRICAL HAZARDS CAN CAUSE BURNS, SHOCKS, AND POTENTIAL ELECTROCUTION

- Always assume that all overhead wires are energized, or "live," and at lethal voltages.
- Never touch a fallen overhead power line. If an overhead wire falls across your vehicle while you are driving, stay inside the vehicle and continue to drive away from the line.
- Never operate electrical equipment while you are standing in water or in the rain.
- Have a qualified electrician inspect electrical equipment that was made wet to ensure that no water remains within the unit.

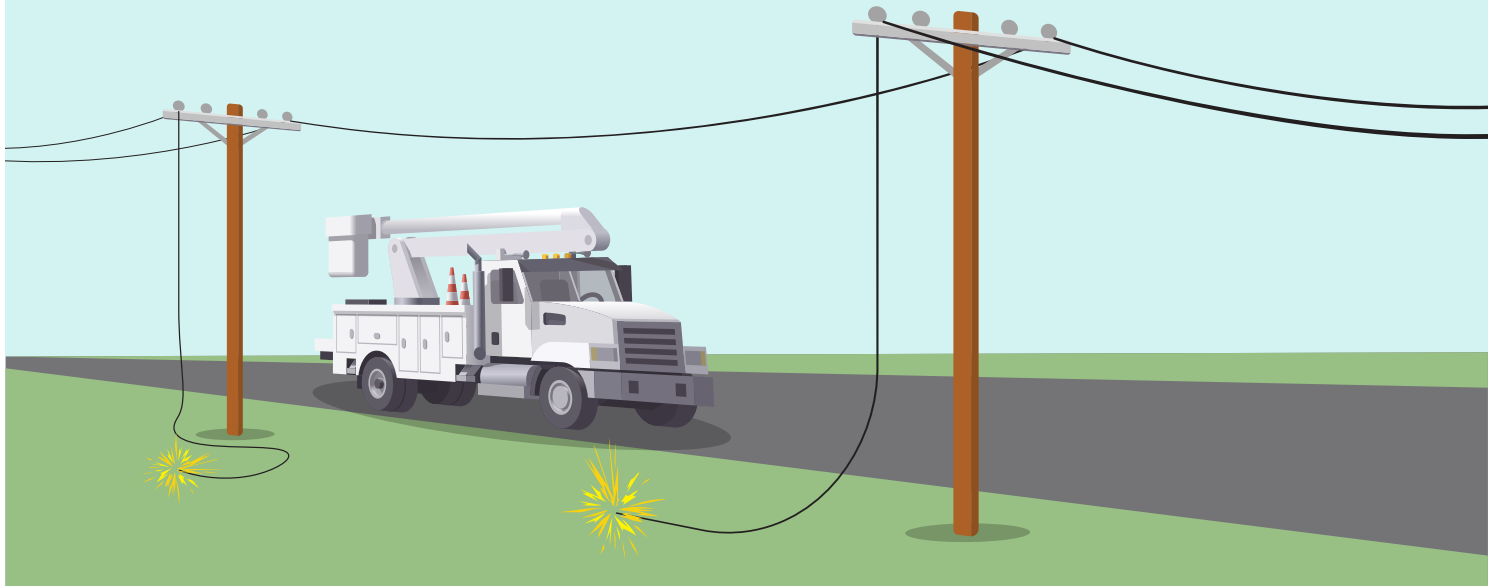
Always report all fallen electrical lines to your local utility provider.

STAY INDOORS DURING A STORM

- Avoid washing your hands, taking a bath or shower, as lightning strikes can cause electrical charges to travel through water lines.
- Stay away from windows and doors. Debris can come through windows if unprotected.
- Do not lie down on concrete floors or lean against concrete walls, which can conduct electricity.

NEVER TOUCH

a fallen overhead power line. Call the utility company to report it.



CARBON MONOXIDE SAFETY



CARBON MONOXIDE (CO)

CO is an invisible, odorless and tasteless gas that is very deadly. Inhaling CO can cause fatigue, weakness, chest pains for people with heart disease, shortness of breath, stomach pain, vomiting, headaches, confusion, lack of coordination, vision problems, loss of consciousness, and in severe cases, death.

**You can't see or smell carbon monoxide.
If you start to feel sick, dizzy or weak get to fresh air immediately.**

GENERATORS PRODUCE HIGH LEVELS OF CO QUICKLY



GENERATOR
EXHAUST

Risk Factors for Exposure Include



OPEN FLAME
GRILL FUMES



VEHICLES
USED INSIDE



LANTERN FUEL
EXHAUST



NAUSEA
VOMITING

Poisoning Signs and Symptoms Include



DIZZINESS
WEAKNESS



CHEST PAIN



CONFUSION



HEADACHE

- Never use a generator indoors!
- Always keep portable generators or gasoline engines outside and at least 20 feet away from your home.
- Do not burn charcoal or gas grills inside a house or garage, vehicle, tent, or fireplace.
- Always turn generators off and let them cool down before refueling.

CO ALARMS SAVE LIVES

- Install battery-operated CO alarms or plug-in CO alarms with battery backup in every room of your home.
- Test your CO alarms regularly.

IF YOU SUSPECT CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING
immediately call 911 or the Florida Poison Information Center at 1-800-222-1222.

FLOOD WATER SAFETY



DON'T DRIVE IN FLOODED AREAS

Drowning is a leading cause of storm related death. **Turn around, don't drown!**

- Floodwater can pose a drowning risk for everyone— regardless of how well they swim.
- Swiftly moving shallow water can be deadly, and even shallow standing water can be dangerous for small children.
- Always follow warnings about flooded roads.
- Don't drive in flooded areas—cars or other vehicles won't protect you from floodwaters.
- They can be swept away or may stall in moving water.

FLOODWATERS CAN BE CONTAMINATED

Avoid skin contact with floodwaters especially if you have open cuts and wounds. Waters can contain harmful bacteria and viruses.

- Do not wade through standing water. If you do, wash thoroughly and put on clean clothes.
- If an open cut or wound comes into contact with floodwaters, wash the area well with soap and clean water to prevent infection. If the area develops redness, swelling or drainage, seek immediate medical attention.
- If you are cut or have puncture wound, and have not had a tetanus vaccination within the past 5 years, you need a tetanus booster.

Avoid eating, drinking, or touching anything that has been contaminated with floodwaters.

- Wash your hands with soap and clean water for 20 seconds:
 - Before preparing or eating food.
 - After using the toilet and changing a diaper.
 - After touching anything contaminated with flood water or sewage.

CHECK IF YOU'RE UNDER A BOIL WATER NOTICE

If you are unsure if your tap water is safe, boil or disinfect it.

- Boiling tap water is the best way to kill harmful parasites, bacteria and viruses. The process is complete when the water is held at a rolling boil for at least one minute. Let the water cool before using.
- If boiling is not an option, disinfect tap water by adding eight drops of regular unscented household bleach (4-6% strength)—this is about one-eighth teaspoon or a dime-sized puddle, per gallon of water. If a higher strength bleach is used (8.25% strength), only add seven drops of bleach.
- Mix the solution and let it stand for 30 minutes. If the water is cloudy after 30 minutes, repeat the steps once.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE **MOLD CLEANUP/ INDOOR AIR QUALITY**



As Floridians clean and repair storm-damaged homes and buildings, the Florida Department of Health recommends taking action to avoid poor indoor air quality.

Moisture that enters buildings from leaks or flooding accelerates mold growth. Mold can cause disease, trigger allergic reactions, and continue to damage materials long after the storm. Failure to control moisture and mold can present short and long-term health risks.

- **Take it out:** Anything that was wet with flood water and can't be cleaned and dried completely within 24 to 48 hours should be taken outside for waste removal. Take photos of all discarded items to assist with filing insurance claims.
- **Air out:** Open all doors and windows when you are removing wet or moldy materials, or when cleaning moldy surfaces.
- **Drying it out:** When electricity is safe to use, you can close doors/windows and use fans and dehumidifiers to help remove moisture indoors. Dehumidifiers can only work effectively under closed, indoor conditions. Dry your home and everything that it wet as quickly as able – within 24 to 48 hours, if possible.
- **Scrub surfaces:** Clean with water and detergent. Remove all mold you can see. Dry right away.
- **Don't cover it, remove it:** Painting or caulking over mold will not prevent mold from growing. Dry it out and remove all the mold before you paint or caulk.
- **Consider your medical status:** Individuals with suppressed or impaired immune systems, mold allergies, asthma, or other chronic lung disease should not clean or remove moldy materials. See your doctor if you are unsure of your medical status. Seek immediate medical attention if you're not feeling well.



Wear personal protective equipment, such as a N-95 respirator, goggles, protective gloves, and rubber boots.



Have your home heating/air-conditioning system cleaned by a professional, experienced in mold clean-up, BEFORE you turn it on. If the system was flooded, turning it on without proper cleaning will spread mold throughout your home.



Never mix bleach with ammonia or any other cleaning chemicals.



Open windows or doors when using any cleaning products.



Children should not be involved in disaster clean-up.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE **DEBRIS CLEANUP AND WOUND CARE**



SAFETY DURING CLEAN-UP

- Wear rubber boots and waterproof gloves to protect against illness during all clean-up activities. Storms can cause toxic materials to be spread through floodwaters.
- Do not mix household cleaners and disinfectants, such as bleach. Combining these products can produce toxic fumes and result in injury or death.
- Walls, hard-surfaced floors, and other household surfaces must be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected with a solution of 1 cup of bleach, per 5 gallons of water.
- Remove and discard contaminated household materials that cannot be disinfected, such as wall-coverings, furniture, and rugs. Wash all linens and clothing in hot water. Drywall and insulation that were exposed to water should be removed and discarded. Disinfection and drying of the internal wall structure will be necessary before replacement of drywall coverings can be installed.
- It can be difficult to throw away items in a home, particularly those with sentimental value. However, keeping certain items that have been exposed to floodwaters may be unhealthy. In general, materials that cannot be thoroughly cleaned and dried within 24-48 hours should be discarded.
- Chainsaws should only be operated in safe conditions, and by licensed professionals that are experienced in proper operation.



TETANUS AND WOUND CARE

Every person involved in cleanup should make sure their tetanus vaccination is current. Adults need a booster shot every 10 years to maintain protection.

Tetanus, commonly known as lockjaw, is a serious bacterial infection that affects the nervous system leading to painful muscle contractions. It can affect your ability to breath and may be life-threatening.

- If you sustain a wound or deep cut, seek medical attention as soon as possible. Ask your health care provider if you need a tetanus booster.
- Proper wound care is essential for all cuts and lacerations regardless of exposure to floodwaters. Clean wounds with soap, disinfectant, or bottled water.
- Individuals deployed to work on recovery efforts are encouraged to contact their primary health care provider to make sure they are current on their tetanus vaccine.

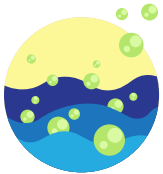


FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE EMERGENCY WOUND CARE



The risk for injury is increased during and after a natural disaster. Floodwaters and standing waters pose various risks, including infectious diseases, chemical hazards, and injuries. Prompt first aid can help heal small wounds and prevent infection.

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY



Avoid contact with flood waters, especially if you have an open wound.



Cover clean, open wounds with a waterproof bandage to reduce chance of infection.



Keep open wounds as clean as possible by washing thoroughly with soap and clean water.



Seek immediate medical care if a wound develops redness, swelling, oozing, or other signs of infection, such as fever, increasing pain, shortness of breath, fast heart rate, confusion/disorientation, or high heart rate.

SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, IF:

- There is a foreign object (soil, wood, metal, or other objects) embedded in the wound.
- Wound is infected (pain and soreness, swelling, redness, draining, or you develop a fever).
- Wound is a result of a puncture by a dirty object.
- Wound is from an animal bite.
- You have signs of sepsis, such as confusion or disorientation, shortness of breath, high heart rate, fever or shivering, extreme pain or discomfort, or clammy/sweaty skin.

TAKE CARE OF WOUNDS



- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and clean water, if possible.
- Avoid touching the wound with your fingers while treating it. If possible, use disposable gloves.
- Remove obstructive jewelry and clothing from the injured body part.
- Apply direct pressure to any bleeding wound to control bleeding.
- Clean the wound after bleeding has stopped.
- Check the wound for dirt and foreign objects.
- Gently flood the wound with bottled water or clean running water (if available, saline solution is preferred).
- Gently clean around the wound with soap and clean water.
- Pat dry and apply an adhesive bandage or dry clean cloth.
- Leave unclean wounds, bites, and punctures open. Wounds that are not cleaned correctly can trap bacteria and result in infection.
- Provide pain relievers when possible.
- Monitor the wound every 24 hours for signs of infection.

If you receive a puncture wound or a wound contaminated with feces, soil, or saliva, have a health care professional determine whether a tetanus booster is necessary based on individual needs and circumstances.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS PREVENTION



Immediately following a storm, flooding may occur. Mosquito eggs laid in the soil during previous floods can hatch and result in very large populations. Most of these mosquitoes are considered nuisance mosquitoes, however it's essential to protect yourself and your family from mosquito breeding and mosquito-borne illness.

PROTECT YOURSELF WITH REPELLENT



Always read label directions carefully for the approved usage before you apply a repellent.



Apply insect repellent to exposed skin or clothing, but not under clothing.



Treat clothing and gear with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Do not apply directly to skin.



Some repellents are not suitable for children. Ensure repellent is safe for children and age appropriate.



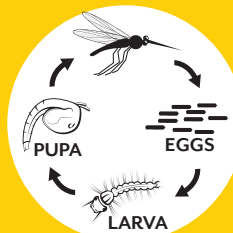
AROUND BUILDINGS

At least once a week, empty or cover anything that could hold water, such as:

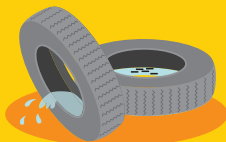
- Buckets
- Toys
- Child Pools and Pool Covers
- Birdbaths
- Trash, Containers, and Recycling Bins
- Boat or Car Covers
- Roof Gutters
- Coolers
- Pet Dishes
- Tires

STOP MOSQUITOES FROM BREEDING

MOSQUITOES CAN LIVE INDOORS AND WILL BITE DAY OR NIGHT.



Mosquitoes breed by laying eggs in and near standing water.



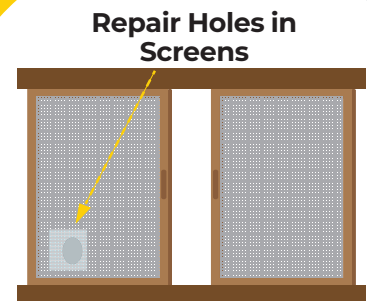
As little as one teaspoon or bottle cap of water standing for more than one week is enough for mosquitoes to breed and multiply.



KEEP THEM OUTSIDE

USE AIR CONDITIONING

KEEP SCREENS ON ALL WINDOWS



Repair Holes in Screens
Keep Doors Exterior Windows Closed



WILDLIFE AND PET SAFETY



Severe weather can displace pets and wildlife and any animals lost, frightened, or hurt – may be more likely to bite.

- Do not approach, feed or handle displaced pets or wildlife.
- Do not disturb an animal that is sleeping, eating, or caring for its young.
- If an unknown animal walks toward you, stay calm and slowly move away.

If you are bitten by an animal and emergency help is needed, go to the nearest available hospital, medical treatment area, or call 911.

IF YOU'RE BITTEN AND NOT IN NEED OF CARE

- Wash your hands with soap and clean fresh water.
- Put pressure on the wound with a clean cloth to stop bleeding. After the bleeding has stopped, pour bottled or clean running water over the wound and gently clean around the wound with soap and clean water.
- Pat dry and use an adhesive bandage or dry clean cloth to cover the wound.
- Once the wound has been stabilized, seek medical assistance to ensure that no additional treatment is needed.

Report all bites to your local animal control or law enforcement to ensure rabies prevention follow-up is conducted.

INJURED OR ORPHANED WILDLIFE

You may encounter a small animal that seems orphaned or abandoned, but the parent may be searching for food or observing its young from a distance.

- Keep your distance, and report any wildlife you think may be injured or orphaned to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator or local Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) regional office.

DOGS

Bites from displaced dogs are the most commonly reported animal bite. If you see a displaced dog:

- Dogs are more likely to bite other dogs than people. If another dog attacks your dog, don't put any part of your body between the dogs. Consider carrying a stick or another sturdy object that you can safely use to try to keep the aggressive dog away.
- Do not make eye-to-eye contact with a stray dog or any animal that's being aggressive.
- Report aggressive dogs to local authorities, such as animal control or law enforcement.

WILDLIFE

Following a storm, you are more likely to see displaced wildlife.

- To avoid snake bites, stay out of tall grass or wear thick boots, and keep hands and feet out of areas you can't see, especially when picking up storm debris. If you think you may have been bitten by a poisonous snake, call poison control at 1-800-222-1222 and seek medical care.
- Alligators may be observed more frequently in flooded areas after a storm. If you believe a specific alligator poses a threat to people, pets or property, call FWC's at 866-FWC-GATOR (866-392-4286).

VIBRIO VULNIFICUS



Following a storm, flood waters and standing waters pose health risks, including infectious diseases such as *Vibrio vulnificus*. It's important to take precautions against infection and illness following any storm.

Vibrio vulnificus is a bacterium that usually lives in warm, brackish sea water. These bacteria typically grow faster during warmer months and flooding, may increase bacteria levels.

It is important to never wade in flood waters or standing water following a storm. People with open wounds, cuts, or scratches may be exposed to *Vibrio vulnificus* through direct contact with flood water, sea water, or brackish water. *Vibrio vulnificus* can also cause disease in those who eat raw or undercooked oysters and shellfish. *Vibrio vulnificus* is not spread person-to-person. Infections may be severe for people with weakened immune systems, especially people who have chronic liver disease or take medications that lowers the body's ability to fight germs.

Vibrio vulnificus can invade the bloodstream, causing a severe life-threatening illness with symptoms such as fever, chills, decreased blood pressure (septic shock), and skin lesions. If you are experiencing of these symptoms, or wound infections, seek medical attention immediately.

SAFETY TIPS

- If you have open wounds, cuts, or scratches, stay out of flood water, standing water, sea water, and brackish water, if possible. If you're exposed to these potential contaminants, wear protective gear to protect yourself from bacteria exposure.
- Immediately clean and monitor wounds and cuts thoroughly with soap and clean running water or bottled water, after any contact with flood water, standing water, sea water, brackish water, or raw/undercooked seafood and its juices.
- Cover your wounds with a waterproof bandage if it could come in contact with flood water, standing water, sea water, or brackish water.
- Seek immediate medical care if a wound develops redness, swelling or oozing, or other signs of infection such as fever, increasing pain, shortness of breath, fast or high heart rate, confusion, or disorientation.

FOOD SAFETY



FOOD SERVICE SAFETY FOR DISASTER-RELATED PUBLIC FEEDING STATIONS

WASH HANDS THOROUGHLY WITH SOAP AND CLEAN WATER

- After using the bathroom
- Before handling any food or consumables
- When switching between raw and cooked foods
- When hands become contaminated

WEAR GLOVES

- Before handling any food.
- Never re-use or wash gloves, only use single-serve
- Change gloves once they become soiled or discolored
- Make sure to wash hands before wearing a new pair of gloves

FOOD PREPARATION SAFETY

- Keep soap and paper towels at all hand-washing stations
- Keep hot foods at 135°F or above
- Keep cold foods at 41°F or below
- Cook foods thoroughly
- Cool hot foods rapidly from 135°F to 70°F, within 2 hours of preparation and within a total of 6 hours from 135°F to 41°F or below
- If possible, do not keep leftovers
- Thaw foods in the refrigerator
- WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT

EMERGENCY RESOURCES



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

FloridaHealth.gov/Emergency

The Florida Department of Health supports local and state responses to public health needs resulting from hurricanes, tropical storms, and other severe weather conditions.



FLORIDA DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

FloridaDisaster.org/Updates

Coordinates state operational response activities among partner organizations that are active during emergencies and disasters that affect the state of Florida. Information about disaster assistance, feeding sites, shelters, and other emergency resources.



DISASTER ASSISTANCE

DisasterAssistance.gov

Provides disaster survivors with information, support, services, and a means to access and apply for disaster assistance through joint data-sharing efforts between federal, tribal, state, local, and private sector partners.



VOLUNTEER FLORIDA

VolunteerFlorida.org

Provides emergency resource information such as donations, volunteer opportunities, grant funding, and additional resources for assistance.



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act, and helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is intimately connected with physical health and lays the foundation for positive growth. Mental health not only affects an individual, it also impacts families and communities.