

Follow These Steps To Clean Up Sewage Indoors



1. Dry the space out

- ◆ All standing water needs to be removed. A sump pump, wet vac, or bucket may be used. For municipal sewer systems, call your local water pollution control authority or public works department for advice about pumping out after a back-up.
- ◆ If you have a septic system, call your local health department for advice about possible causes and solutions.
- ◆ Much of the equipment for cleaning and drying out can be rented locally.
- ◆ Establish temperature control to enhance the evaporation rate and effectiveness of ventilation or dehumidification systems in use.
- ◆ All solid waste must be collected and discarded.
- ◆ Use dehumidifiers, fans, window air conditioners and open windows to aid in the drying process when available. Exchange humid air in the area with less humid air from other sources. **Whole house air conditioners or furnace blowers should be used only if standing wastewater did not get into the air ducts.**
- ◆ Remove vinyl covered wallpaper in affected areas, as it slows the drying process.

2. Discard and Disinfect

- ◆ Contaminated carpets, rugs, and upholstered furniture should be discarded.*
- ◆ If you can see a water line or stain on wallboard or paneling from the sewage back-up, the material should be cut out up to several inches above the water line and replaced.
- ◆ Wash the affected area with detergent solution to remove surface dirt and contamination. **Don't skip this step, or the disinfection step will be ineffective!** Allow it to air-dry.
- ◆ Apply a disinfectant labeled as being bactericidal (kills bacteria) or a solution of 1 part bleach + 9 parts water. Disinfectants and/or bleach should remain in contact with the items for 15-20 minutes to be effective. Allow it to air-dry.

*Sort through the remaining contents and determine which items can be salvaged, and which must be discarded.

- ◆ The general rule of thumb is to discard all porous materials that have become contaminated by sewage, especially cardboard boxes, paper items, books and magazines, carpets and rugs, unfinished wood, wallboard, upholstered items, and anything else that is difficult to clean.
- ◆ Sometimes, certain items like clothing may be salvageable if they can be adequately laundered. Consult with a professional water damage restorer or cleaning professional for specifics.

Be Sure To Discard All Contaminated:

- ◆ Cardboard
- ◆ Carpets & carpet pads
- ◆ Cosmetics
- ◆ Food
- ◆ Mattresses & pillows
- ◆ Medicines & medical supplies
- ◆ Stuffed animals & toys
- ◆ Unfinished furniture
- ◆ Upholstered furniture

