

Storm Recovery

MOLD CLEAN-UP AND 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 dehumidify under closed indoor conditions. Dry your home and everything in it as quickly as possible – 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.



Never mix bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.



Have your home heating and air-conditioning system (HVAC) checked and cleaned by a professional experienced in mold clean-up before you turn it on. If the system was flooded with water, turning it on will spread mold throughout your home.



Open windows or doors when using any cleaning products.



Children should not be involved in disaster clean-up.

