



Foodborne Illness Prevention Program Emergency Response Fact Sheet for Licensed Facilities

FLOODING

Foods that have come into contact with floodwater can be a serious health hazard. Floodwaters can be contaminated with sewage, dirt, oil or other toxic substances. Floodwater may have covered, dripped on, or seeped into foods. If power is interrupted in the facility, please refer to the DHS fact sheet on power outages as well.

UPON RE-ENTERING FACILITY

Watch for loose ceilings or fixtures that could fall when entering the facility, in addition to holes in the floor or protruding nails. Until the building has aired out, use a flashlight to avoid igniting lingering gasses.

- Let the building air for several minutes to remove foul odors or escaped gas
- Do not smoke or use open flame until you are sure that it is safe
- Turn off gas at meter or tank
- Do not turn on an electrical system; call an electrician immediately to check the entire wiring system and equipment for any short circuits
- Disconnect all appliances
- Do not operate equipment until each piece is inspected by a competent service person

FOOD

Foods that have come into contact with floodwater can be a serious health hazard. The only flood-damaged goods entirely safe for salvage are those in hermetically sealed cans if they are scrubbed clean, rinsed and sanitized prior to use.

Be sure to remove the labels and any encrusted silt from the surface of cans and wash in warm soapy water. Rinse thoroughly. Soak the containers in a 50 to 100 ppm chlorine sanitizing solution for one minute. This solution can be made by adding one to two teaspoons of household bleach per gallon of clean water. Be sure to re-label the cans with a permanent marker before storage. Bulging or leaking cans should be discarded.

Foods to save:

- Food in undamaged, sealed cans

Foods to discard:

- Open containers and packages of food
- Unopened jars with paper seals under the lid (mayonnaise, salad dressing)
- All containers with screw-caps, snap lids, twist caps, flip-top lids and similar type closures that have been submerged in flood waters

- ❑ Spices, seasonings, flavorings, and extracts
- ❑ Food in canisters (flour, salt, sugar)
- ❑ Sealed glass containers and preserves sealed with paraffin (jam, jelly)
- ❑ Fresh meat, fish and poultry
- ❑ Fresh fruits and vegetables
- ❑ Containers with non-sealed fitted lids (cocoa, baking powder)
- ❑ Food in paper, foil, cellophane, or cardboard containers (cereal, pasta, rice, cookies)
- ❑ Bottled carbonated beverages with encrusted silt in the lid
- ❑ Containers with cork or cork-lined lids or caps

EQUIPMENT

Equipment and utensils affected by floodwater should be cleaned and sanitized prior to being used. Refrigerators and freezers should be left open to air dry after cleaning. Use activated charcoal to remove persistent odors in these units.

- ❑ Contact a qualified service professional about salvaging or discarding equipment including, but not limited to, refrigeration and freezer units, cooking and hot holding units, stoves units, ice machines, pop dispensers, salad bars, mixers, and other food processing or mechanical equipment
- ❑ All filters on equipment should be removed and replaced if not designed to be cleaned in place
- ❑ After replacing filters, flush water lines (including steam and ice water lines) for 10-15 minutes
- ❑ Discard all ice in ice machine, clean and sanitize the interior surfaces, run the ice through 3 cycles and discard after each cycle
- ❑ Clean and sanitize equipment, utensils and surfaces with 100-200 ppm chlorine solution
- ❑ Discard paper, plastic, cardboard, foil and wooden single service items
- ❑ Run the empty dishwasher through its cycle three times to flush the lines before use
- ❑ Verify that all cold holding units will keep food below 41F; freezer units will keep frozen food below 0F
- ❑ Verify that all hot holding units will hold food above 140F

WATER SUPPLY

The water supply may be contaminated by floodwater making it unsafe for human consumption. The water supply should not be used until it has been tested and cleared by the Drinking Water Section at 971-673-0405. A facility that is served by an individual well should have the well and distribution system disinfected and tested prior to being put back into service.

- ❑ Only potable water should be used for handwashing, cooking and ice making
- ❑ Only potable water should be used for cleaning food contact surfaces and dishwashing

SEWAGE SYSTEM

Flooding may cause the septic system or sanitary sewer to fail. If the septic system is flooded, discontinue using it until waters have receded and the system has been checked for structural integrity. Persons may have to improvise portable sewage disposal systems using buckets or other similar containers. If this is necessary, ensure some type of lid is provided for safety. Disposal should be done in as sanitary a manner as possible. Burial is the best option.

PHYSICAL FACILITY

Foundations, walls, doors and windows may be damaged and need repair. Repairing any damage immediately will help prevent further damage and wear in the future.

- ❑ Replace or repair damaged surfaces (floors, walls and ceilings)
- ❑ Scrub and sanitize all floors, walls and ceilings with a 100 to 200ppm chlorine solution
- ❑ Water damaged ventilation systems that cannot be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized should be removed and replaced. In all cases, replace all ventilation air filters.

RODENTS AND INSECTS

Floodwaters may also force rodents and insects inside the facility. Remove any dead pests and sanitize any food contact surfaces that have come into contact with pests.

- ❑ Remove accumulated debris and garbage
- ❑ Seal all openings into the facility to prevent entry of rodents and insects



CONTAMINATED WATER DUE TO FLOODING

Due to the recent flooding that has occurred in your area, we are advising restaurant operators to take the following precautions to protect the health and safety of your customers and yourselves:

Post a public notice. The notice should include the specific problem, the length of time the problem is expected to exist, and a statement that your restaurant has implemented alternative procedures to allow the restaurant to operate in a safe manner. The local public health authority contact number should also be included.

Discontinue the service of the contaminated water. Alternative sources of water must be provided for drinking purposes, washing of food and food contact surfaces, and for cooking. Boil the water or provide bottled water for these purposes. Water should come to a rolling boil for at least one minute prior to being used. Water chemically disinfected in the facility is not appropriate for this situation.

- Use only coffee machines that boil the water as part of the brewing process
- Shut off drinking fountains and post signs in restrooms to indicate that the water is not safe
- Eliminate ice making and use ice from an approved source
- You may use the contaminated water to flush toilets and to clean floors, walls, or ceilings
- You are encouraged to use disposable dishware and flatware but high temperature dishwashing machines that are working correctly can be used as usual or the three compartment sink method can only be used if potable water from an uncontaminated source or boiled water is used for all three steps
- Low temperature dishwashing machines **cannot** be used for dishwashing
- Handwashing must be performed with potable water from an uncontaminated source or boiled water. A temporary arrangement for handwashing should be set-up using a 5 gallon food grade container for water storage which has a valve that when opened provides a constant flow of water. A waste container should be provided for wastewater or the water container should drain into an appropriate sink.

You are encouraged to minimize your menu items and to focus on those items that do not require a great deal of water for preparation.

If you cannot meet the recommendations specified above, you should close your facility until the boil water notice has been lifted. If you have any questions, please contact your local health department or the Department of Human Services, Foodborne Illness Prevention Program at (971) 673-0185.