



HOMEOWNER / PRINTABLE FIELD GUIDE

Water and Storm Damage: First Steps

Safety, documentation and questions for a qualified restoration professional.

First, protect people

Stay out of a building with structural, electrical, gas or floodwater hazards until authorities or qualified professionals say it is safe.

Contact your insurer promptly and photograph affected areas before cleanup when safe. Follow your policy instructions and keep records of calls and expenses.

Act promptly and safely

Stop the water source if safe. Dry or remove wet items as quickly as practical; CDC advises drying a flooded home within 24 to 48 hours when possible.

For sewage or contaminated water, EPA advises using an experienced professional. Keep people with respiratory risks away from moldy areas.

Do not mix cleaning chemicals. Ask a qualified professional about containment and drying plans for large or contaminated losses.

Before hiring restoration help

- ☐ Get a written scope for extraction, drying, removal, cleaning and reconstruction
- ☐ Ask how moisture is measured and when drying is considered complete
- ☐ Confirm who handles contents, disposal, photos and insurer documentation
- ☐ Check license or certification where applicable, insurance, written terms and change orders
- ☐ Beware of pressure, vague pricing and requests for unusual payment methods

Loss record

Date discovered / affected rooms / source / insurer claim number / professional contacts

Questions for the restoration visit

Ask the professional to identify water source, affected materials, contamination category, drying measurements, daily monitoring plan and the criterion for completion in a written scope.



For immediate danger call emergency services. For a project request, use saferpros.com or 1-800-HIRE-A-PRO. • Call 1-800-HIRE-A-PRO (1-800-447-3277).

Sources and further reading

CDC: Mold and Flood Cleanup - <https://www.cdc.gov/mold-health/about/>

EPA: Mold Cleanup in Your Home - <https://www.epa.gov/mold/mold-cleanup-your-home>

FTC: Avoid Scams After Weather Emergencies - <https://consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-avoid-scams-after-weather-emergencies-and-natural-disasters>

Educational guidance for U.S. readers. Requirements, permits, licenses, consumer rights and payment rules vary by location and project. Check current local rules and your written agreement. Safer Pros is a referral and project-support platform; participating providers are independent businesses.

Additional notes and next actions
