



# Returning to Your Home After a Flood

CENTRAL DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
*Adapted from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention*

When returning to your home after a flood, be aware that flood water may contain sewage and other harmful bacteria or chemicals. Areas where standing water has drained may contain contaminated soil or debris that can also pose a health hazard, including risk of respiratory or skin infections. The health risks will decrease as these areas dry.

## PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY

- Do not eat or drink anything that may have come in contact with flood water.
- Remove any items touched by flood water that cannot be washed and disinfected. These *may* include:
  - Mattresses
  - Stuffed animals
  - Carpeting
  - Baby toys
  - Carpet padding
  - Pillows
  - Rugs
  - Foam-rubber items
  - Upholstered furniture
  - Books
  - Cosmetics
  - Wall coverings
- Make sure that your source of drinking water is safe and uncontaminated before use. Laboratory testing is the only way to make sure drinking water is safe. Contact your drinking water system operator or CDHD if you have questions about testing.
- Wash your hands with soap and clean water often, especially after touching soil/mud, debris, or household items contacted by flood water. Remember to wash your children's hands frequently too, especially before eating.
- Keep children and pets out of the affected area until cleanup or natural drying is completed. Wear rubber boots, rubber gloves, and goggles during cleanup of an affected area.
- Do not allow children to play with toys that have been in contact with flood water until they have been washed and disinfected. For information on disinfecting certain nonporous toys, visit CDC's Healthy Water Cleaning and Sanitizing section at [cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/cleaning/index.html#bleach](http://cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/cleaning/index.html#bleach).
- Have your on-site wastewater system professionally inspected and serviced if you suspect damage.

### Contact CDHD

If you have questions, please contact CDHD's Environmental Health Department  
Phone: (208) 327-7499 | Fax: (208) 327-8553  
707 N. Armstrong Pl., Boise, ID 83704

