

September 15, 2017



FACT SHEET: PROPER SEWAGE CLEAN UP PROCEDURES

Heavy rainfall from Hurricane Irma may result in flood waters that are contaminated with sewage. Proper cleaning and disinfecting procedures are recommended to prevent illness.

How to clean up sewage contaminated items and sewage spills inside your home:

- Wear protective clothing such as rubber boots and waterproof gloves.
- Clean walls, hard-surfaced floors, and other household surfaces with soap and water and disinfect with a solution of 1/4 cup of bleach in one gallon of water. Once cleanup is complete, dry out affected items to prevent the growth of mold.
- Do not mix ammonia cleansers with bleach as toxic vapors will form.
- Wash all linens and clothing in hot water or dry clean them.
- Discard items that cannot be washed or dry cleaned, such as mattresses, carpeting, wall coverings and upholstered furniture.

For spills outside your home:

- Contact your utility or a registered septic tank contractor for clean up.
- Minor spills requiring immediate attention may be disinfected with regular garden lime from a garden shop. Follow the lime container's label instructions for personal protective equipment needed. Use lime outdoors only.
 - Sprinkle the lime onto the spill so the spill is dusted mostly white on the surface. If the residue is thicker in some places use a rake to mix the lime and the residue.
 - After a day, rake up the thicker residue and place it in a trash bag for disposal with the other trash. Use a sprinkler or hose to water the lime and residue into the soil.
 - Let the area dry in the sun for a day before allowing access. If there is still white lime dust visible on the yard, water it in until the white dust is gone.

Follow proper hygiene procedures to prevent illness:

- Keep hands and fingers away from the nose, mouth, eyes and ears.
- Wash hands with soap and water immediately after cleanup efforts as well as before eating or drinking.
- Keep fingernails short and clean. Use a stiff brush to remove dirt and foreign materials.
- Do not store fresh work clothes with used work clothes.
- Shower as soon as possible after cleaning up sewage or sewage contaminated flood waters.

For further information, please contact your county health department or visit <http://www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/index.html> or www.FloridaDisaster.org.