

August 29, 2019



## **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](http://www.FloridaDisaster.org).