

Water Damage Clean-up and Mold Prevention

Water Damaged Material	Appropriate Action Within 24 - 48 hours
Paper and cardboard	Discard
Carpet and backing	Remove water with water extraction vacuum; Reduce humidity levels with dehumidifier; Accelerate drying process with fans
Ceiling tiles	Discard and replace
Cellulose or Fiberglass insulation	Discard and replace
Concrete or cinder block	Remove water with water extraction vacuum; Accelerate drying process with fans
Hard surface, porous flooring (linoleum, vinyl, ceramic tile)	Vacuum or damp wipe with sanitizer and allow to dry; Scrub surface as necessary; Check to make sure subflooring is dry; Dry as necessary
Non-porous, hard surface (plastic, metal)	Vacuum or damp wipe with sanitizer and allow to dry; Scrub surface as necessary
Upholstered furniture	Remove water with water extraction vacuum; Accelerate drying process with dehumidifiers, fans, and/or heaters; May wish to consult with a restoration professional
Wallboard (drywall, gypsum)	Cut out portion which has become wet (cut a few inches above damaged board); Discard and replace wallboard; Ventilate the wall cavity
Window treatments (drapes)	Follow laundering or cleaning instructions recommended by manufacturer
Wood surfaces	Remove moisture immediately and use dehumidifiers, gentle heat, and/or fans for drying; Treated or finished wood surfaces may be sanitized and allow to dry; Wet paneling should be pried away from wall and discarded; Ventilate the wall cavity

Personal Protection:

- Only individuals necessary for the clean-up process should be in affected areas. Children, elderly, and sensitive people should avoid these areas.
- Boots, rubber/vinyl gloves, and eye protection should be worn at all times.
- Long sleeves and pants should be worn while conducting clean-up; Launder separately or dispose of.
- Medium to high-efficiency filter dust mask (N95 or greater) should be worn to limit exposure to airborne particles.
- Close off all ventilation units (intake and return) and open windows to provide natural ventilation.
- Cover exposed cuts or open sores prior to beginning any work.
- Enclose all moldy or contaminated materials in plastic before carrying through the house to protect others.
- After work is completed, the area around the entrance used should be cleaned thoroughly.
- Ensure no electrical shock hazard exists by turning off main breakers until water has been removed.
- When using a sanitizer, a widely accepted sanitizing agent is 1 cup of bleach diluted in 1 gallon of water.
- It is important to remember that even if materials are dried within 48 hours, mold growth may have occurred.
- Call the Cuyahoga County Board of Health with any further questions - 216-201-2000.