

FACT SHEET

CLEAN UP / SALVAGE Household Items

Insurance Claims

Insurance claims need to be considered first. The advice contained within this document is of a general nature.

Always seek expert advice on repairs or discuss concerns with your insurance company. This needs to be done prior to cleaning or disposing of damaged items.

Bedding

Mattresses soaked with flood water generally are damaged beyond use and should be discarded.

Feather and foam rubber pillows may be washed but those stuffed with kapok or cotton may not.

Wait until your home and belongings have been thoroughly cleaned and dried before deciding whether to throw them out. They may return to a good condition or at least be repairable. Much can be salvaged if immediate restoration steps are taken as described in the following pages.

Cleaning Tips

Tackle one room at a time and make sure you are working in a well ventilated area.

Apply the cleaner and give it time to work before you mop or sponge it up. Follow directions and all safety precautions on the container. If you have any doubt, seek advice. Many products have consumer advisory hotlines on their labels.

A two bucket approach is most efficient:

- Use one bucket for rinse water and the other for the cleaner. Using two buckets keeps most of the dirty rinse water out of your cleaning solution.
- Rinse out your sponge, mop or cleaning cloth in the rinse bucket.
- Wring the mop as dry as possible and keep it rolled up tight as you put it in the cleaner bucket.
- Let it unroll to absorb the cleaner.
- Replace the rinse water frequently (making sure the water you use is free from contamination).

After cleaning a room or an item, go over it again with a disinfectant to kill the germs and remove the smell left by the flood waters.

You may need to repeat this after 24-48 hours to kill mould and fungi not destroyed on the first application. You may also need to get rid of mildew, an unwelcome companion to moisture, which can produce a strong musty odour.

Drying

It will take several weeks to completely dry out your house. The following tips may assist:

- On dry days, keep all doors and windows open.
- On wet days leave windows ajar – the inside of the house will only dry when moisture can get out.
- If you have heaters turn them on in as many rooms as possible, leaving the windows open.
- Do not use more than one heater per room – some heat will help drive off the moisture, but too much may warp and crack wood.
- Look for trapped mud in less obvious places – under shower trays, benches, baths and bottom shelves.
- Remove the skirting or plinth covering these spaces and hose or pump out the mud, then dry as quickly as possible.
- Ignore any mould growing on wet linings until drying is complete, it can then be removed.



DISASTER RECOVERY FACT SHEET CLEAN UP / SALVAGE Household Items

Floor Coverings

You will have to make a decision regarding cleaning your rugs and wall-to-wall carpeting. If you leave the carpeting on the floor, you risk fostering wood decay, mildew, and warpage of the flooring by hindering its drying. However, if you remove the carpeting, you risk shrinkage. Although professional cleaners do have methods for controlling shrinkage, the chance of preventing it entirely for wall-to-wall carpeting is unlikely.

If linoleum is broken, brittle, and cannot be salvaged, remove it with a chisel or hoe. Be sure to let the under floor dry thoroughly before laying any type of floor covering.

Cleaning Supplies

It is important to thoroughly wash and disinfect every part of your home that has been inundated because of contamination from flood waters.

Put together a clean-up kit, containing useful items such as a broom, mop, bucket, and cleaning supplies.

In most cases, household cleaning products will do the job.

Always check the label to see which materials they can be used upon and their directions for use.

| Product | Recommended | Also Suitable |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Cleaners | Household all purpose cleaner | Laundry soap or detergent |
| Disinfectants | Commercial disinfectants or sanitisers | 1/4 cup of laundry bleach* with 4 litres of water |
| Mildew removers | Commercial mildew removers | Washing soda tri-sodium phosphate or 1/4 cup of laundry bleach* with 4 litres of water |

* Liquid chlorine bleach can do a variety of flood clean-up jobs. Check the label to ensure 5.25% sodium hypochlorite is the only active ingredient. Bleach that has a scent added to improve its smell is available. Do not use dry bleach or any bleach that does not contain chlorine.

Draining Under The House

Drain away water lying under the house. It may be necessary to dig a pit and pump out the water that collects. Where there is no access, cut a trapdoor in the floor.

Getting rid of excess water under wood or particleboard floors is especially important to avoid decay. If you do not feel confident doing this, seek the advice of a licensed tradesperson.

To increase the airflow under the house and assist drying:

- cut back or dig out plants obstructing vents
- leave access doors open
- have a licensed tradesperson knock out the ventilators in the foundations
- remove part of the foundation enclosure, such as baseboards or sheet material, where fixed to the outside of the stumps.

Forced ventilation, such as air conditioners or industrial fans can be used in areas where there is not sufficient cross flow of air.

WEBSITES AND PHONE NUMBERS

Local Disaster Coordination Centre (if activated)
1300 652 659

Rockhampton Regional Council
07 4932 9000 or 1300 22 55 77
www.rrc.qld.gov.au


Additional Disaster Recovery information
Council's website - www.rockhamptonregion.qld.gov.au/CouncilServices/Disaster-Management/Recover-from-a-disaster

State Emergency Services
132 500 or www.emergency.qld.gov.au/ses

Department Main Roads Traffic Information
131940.qld.gov.au/Road-Conditions.aspx

RACQ Road Conditions
www.racq.com.au/travel/Maps_and_Directions/road_conditions

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**DISASTERS
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