

Guidelines for Black Water Contamination and Cleaning Up After a Flood

Can the carpet be salvaged?

This depends on the type of water and the extent of damage.

What is Grey Water?

Grey Water is dirt and dust in the water from within the home – e.g. water comes in through the windows or the roof and floods the home. This is salvageable.

Clean Water is from the tap or Hot Water Cylinder.

What is Contaminated Water?

Water entering the home off roads, paddocks, gardens etc may have sewage contamination, bacteria from animals or animal faeces, garden live bacteria, chemicals, fertilisers etc.

If a whole room area or house lot has been flooded there is too much contamination to guarantee sterilisation for the client, then the carpet needs to be dumped.

If only a square metre or thereabouts is wet, then the carpet may be recoverable.

What action should I take?

- Take photos of the damaged carpet and furniture.
- Any items placed outside **must** be covered with plastic to protect from the weather until inspected by a Loss Adjuster.
- Uplift carpet and underlay for disposal
 - Make sure to use protective clothing for contaminated items – gloves, masks, disposable clothing, gumboots etc.
 - Roll up carpet and leave outside for pick up (smaller items can be placed in bin liners)
- Cut out a sample of carpet and underlay for inspection (put into a sealed bag for the Loss Adjuster)
- If possible spray diluted bleach onto concrete/wooden floors, around skirtings after hosing out (if appropriate).
- For furniture and paint surfaces, any household cleaning spray can be used.

A description of typical house flood damage and clean up requirements

When your house floods, the water can wreak havoc on the structure of the house, your personal belongings and the health of the inside environment.

Flood waters contain many contaminants and lots of mud. High dollar items can get ruined all at once, even with just an inch of water – for example: carpeting, wallboard, appliances and furniture.

A more severe storm or deeper flood may add damage to even more expensive systems like ducts, the heater and air conditioner, roofing, private sewage and well systems, utilities, and the foundation.

After a flood, cleaning up is a long and hard process. Here is a list of common techniques for sanitising and cleaning flooded items:

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If your insurance covers the damage, your agent will arrange a Loss Adjuster to contact you.

List the damage and take photos or video recordings as you clean.

Personal Protective Equipment

It is possible that any deposits in or around your property may be contaminated with sewerage, chemicals and sharp objects.

It is strongly recommended that you wear suitable protective equipment such as heavy duty waterproof gloves, boots and where necessary, face masks.

Contaminated Mud

Shovel out as much mud as possible, then use a garden sprayer or hose to wash away mud from hard surfaces.

Clean and Disinfect Every Surface

Scrub surfaces with hot water and a heavy duty cleaner.

Disinfect with either a solution of ¼ cup (50mls) chlorine bleach per gallon (5Litres) of water or a use a product that is labelled as a disinfectant to kill germs.

In the Kitchen

Immerse glass, porcelain, china, plastic dinnerware and enamelware for 10minutes in a disinfecting solution: 2 tablespoons of chlorine bleach per gallon of hot water.

Air dry dishes – do not use a towel.