

Storm Recovery

KEEP YOURSELF SAFE DURING DEBRIS CLEAN-UP

The Florida Department of Health reminds residents to keep their health in mind when cleaning up debris following a disaster.

SAFETY DURING CLEAN-UP

- Wear rubber boots and waterproof gloves to protect against illness during all clean-up activities. Storms can cause toxic materials to be spread through flood waters.
- Do not mix household cleaners and disinfectants, such as bleach. Combining these products can produce toxic fumes and result in injury or death.
- Walls, hard-surfaced floors, and other household surfaces must be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected with a solution of 1 cup of bleach, per 5 gallons of water.
- Remove and discard contaminated household materials that cannot be disinfected, such as wall-coverings, furniture, and rugs. Wash all linens and clothing in hot water. Drywall and insulation that were exposed to water should be removed and discarded. Disinfection and drying of the internal wall structure will be necessary before replacement of drywall coverings can be installed.
- It can be difficult to throw away items in a home, particularly those with sentimental value. However, keeping certain items that have been exposed to floodwaters may be unhealthy. In general, materials that cannot be thoroughly cleaned and dried within 24-48 hours should be discarded.
- Chainsaws should only be operated in safe conditions, and by licensed professionals that are experienced in proper operation.



TETANUS AND WOUND CARE



Every person involved in cleanup should make sure their tetanus vaccination is current. Adults need a booster shot every 10 years to maintain protection. Tetanus, commonly known as lockjaw, is a serious bacterial infection that affects the nervous system leading to painful muscle contractions. It can affect your ability to breath and may be life-threatening.

- If you sustain a wound or deep cut, seek medical attention as soon as possible. Ask your doctor if you need a tetanus booster.
- Proper wound care is essential for all cuts and lacerations regardless of exposure to floodwaters. Clean wounds with soap, disinfectant, or bottled water.
- Individuals deployed to work on recovery efforts are encouraged to contact their primary health care provider to make sure they are current on their tetanus vaccine.

