

The Lake County Health Department provides the following guidelines to homeowners affected by flooding and sewer backups. Immediate cleanup of the sewage contaminated area is very important.

1. If there is standing water, make sure that all electrical power has been turned off in the affected area.
2. Keep children away from contaminated areas.
3. Keep pets away from contaminated areas – they may spread contamination to clean areas.
4. Rubber gloves should be worn when cleaning contaminated areas.
5. If possible, try to air out the contaminated area before cleanup. If this is not feasible, take frequent “fresh air” breaks during cleanup to avoid nausea from foul odors.
6. Use household disinfectants/sanitizers (pine-oil or ammonia solutions) or liquid chlorine bleach (1/4 cup per gallon of water) to disinfect contaminated areas.

DO NOT combine ammonia and chlorine products (toxic gases will occur). Items that are difficult to clean and disinfect, such as carpeting, upholstered furniture, bedding and mattresses, may need to be thrown out if contaminated.

7. Use detergent and tap water to scrub furniture, walls, fixtures and appliances. Wash clothing and bedding with hot water and detergent.
8. Contaminated cloth toys and stuffed animals should be thrown out. Plastic toys, if not disposed of, must be disinfected in chlorine bleach solution and then air-dried.
9. **DO NOT** eat or drink anything prior to thoroughly cleaning hands. **DO NOT** eat food from contaminated areas, unless the food is in cans. Thoroughly wash all sealed cans in good condition and immerse in a bleach solution for at least five minutes. Any foods not in cans, or in cans that are dented, bulging or leaking, must be thrown out.

Moreover, contaminated bottles should be thrown out because of the inability to

completely disinfect under the caps.

10. Immediately after cleanup, shower with soap and hot water, making especially sure to scrub hands, face, and fingernails.
11. Diarrhea is a common health problem following exposure to sewage or contaminated water. If you or any members of your family begin to experience this problem, see your doctor or local treatment center.
12. After cleaning, dry the area as quickly as possible with a fan, or dehumidifier, and open windows. This will help prevent mold and mildew.

