

## Getting Help

- The American Red Cross can help you by providing you with a voucher to purchase new clothing, groceries, essential medications, bedding, essential furnishings, and other items to meet emergency needs. Listen to local radio stations to find out where to go for this assistance, or look up American Red Cross in the phone book and call.
- The Red Cross can provide you with a cleanup kit: mop, broom, bucket, and cleaning supplies.
- Contact your insurance agent to discuss claims.
- Listen to your radio for information on assistance that may be provided by the state or federal government and other organizations.
- If you hire cleanup or repair contractors, be sure they are qualified to do the job. Be wary of people who drive through neighborhoods offering help in cleaning up or repairing your home. Check references.

Issued in furtherance of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.

ARC 4476  
FEMA L-198  
Aug. 1992

## After a Flood:

### The First Steps



**American  
Red Cross**



Your home has been flooded. Although floodwaters may be down in some areas, many dangers still exist. Here are things to remember in the days ahead.

- Roads may be closed because they have been damaged or are covered by water. Barricades have been placed for your protection. If you come upon a barricade or a flooded road, go another way.
- Keep listening to the radio for news about what to do, where to go, or places to avoid.
- Emergency workers will be assisting people in flooded areas. You can help them by staying off the roads and out of the way.
- If you must walk or drive in areas that have been flooded —
  - Stay on firm ground. Moving water only 6 inches deep can sweep you off your feet. Standing water may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
  - Flooding may have caused familiar places to change. Floodwaters often erode roads and walkways. Flood debris may hide animals and broken bottles, and it is also very slippery. Avoid walking or driving through floodwaters.
- Play it safe. Additional flooding or flash floods can occur. Listen for local warnings and information. If your car stalls in rapidly rising waters, get out immediately and climb to higher ground.

## Staying Healthy

- A flood can cause emotional and physical stress. You need to look after yourself and your family as you focus on cleanup and repair.
  - Rest often and eat well.
  - Keep a manageable schedule. Make a list and do jobs one at a time.
  - Discuss your concerns with others and seek help. Contact the Red Cross for information on emotional support available in your area.

## Cleaning Up and Repairing Your Home

- Turn off the electricity at the main breaker of fuse box, even if the power is off in your community. That way, you can decide when your home is dry enough to turn it back on.
- Get a copy of the book *Repairing Your Flooded Home*. It will tell you:
  - How to enter your home safely.
  - How to protect your home and belongings from further damage.
  - How to record damage to support insurance claims and requests for assistance.
  - How to check for gas or water leaks and how to have service restored.
  - How to clean up appliances, furniture, floors, and other belongings.

*Repairing Your Flooded Home* is available free from the American Red Cross or your state or local emergency manager.