

225-262-7942

Basic Flood Remediation

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The purpose of the document is to help those affected by the recent flooding in Louisiana understand the proper procedure for restoring their home. There are a lot of misinformation and scams out there. RTC has been performing mold, lead, asbestos, bacteria and other environmental investigations in south Louisiana for the last 16 years and we will still be here long after the storms and flooding are over.

The process is simple and listed below.

1. Remove the damaged (wet) components
2. Dry the structure
3. Disinfect the remaining materials
4. Clean the structure
5. Have it inspected
6. Rebuild

Below we will break down each of these and give you more information to help you along.

1. Removing the wet components
 - Many people have already started or completed this step. Any material in the home that got wet and is not made of solid wood needs to be discarded. This includes cabinets, sheetrock, carpet, baseboards, moldings and furnishings. Also flooring needs to be removed to allow for treating the slab with disinfectants.
 - Sheetrock should be removed at least 1 ft. above the waterline.
 - Sheetrock behind cabinets should be removed to the same level as the rest of the home.
 - Insulation should be removed to the same height as the sheetrock.
 - This process should be done slowly and methodically in order to create as little debris as possible.
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2. Drying the Structure

1. This is the step that trips most people up. It is very difficult to dry a structure using Louisiana air. We routinely have humidity that is above 70%, so we are essentially using wet air to dry wet wood, it just doesn't work well. We need to use dehumidifiers and fans to create the right atmosphere and conditions for drying to begin.
2. The structure is dry when the sill plates are all reading below 12 with a pin type moisture meter.

3. Disinfecting the materials

1. It is pointless to disinfect before you finish drying. Mold and bacteria need moisture to grow, if the materials are still wet then the mold and bacteria can continue to grow. Wait until the structure is dry before you try to disinfect.
2. Once the structure is dry, spray a solution that contains a disinfectant. Notice the complete absence of the phrase mold killer. There are no chemicals on the market that kill and destroy mold well enough to pass mold samples on their own. The disinfectant is more to eliminate the bacterial concern, we will address the mold in the next step. You should treat all materials, including the slab or subfloor, with the disinfectant.

4. Clean the materials

1. The bacterial problem has been addressed, but there are still dead bacteria and mold spores on the surface of the structure. Since the material is dry, mold can no longer reproduce. At this stage, we will use a degreaser solution to remove the dead bacteria, dirt, debris and mold spores from the surface.
2. We are not trying to kill mold, we are removing from the surface, which is the recommendation of every mold certification organization.
3. Use the degreaser with a little water and some rags or mops to wipe every surface in the home. This will remove much of the bacteria and mold from the surface.

5. Have it inspected

1. Any company who is walking through your neighborhood passing out mold certificates for \$1000 is a scam.
 2. A real inspection will first check to make sure the building is dry, then check to make sure it is clean, then sample the building for mold and bacteria. Only after the samples return clean, can a building be reading for reconstruction.
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3. RTC does provide these services, please call 225-262-7942 or email jason@rtcpro.com to find out more, this is intended to be helpful documentation not a sales presentation.
6. Rebuild
 1. Once the building has passed inspection, it is ready for rebuild.

MISINFORMATION AND LIES ABOUT FLOOD DAMAGE

There are magical chemicals at home improvement stores that kill mold and prevent mold growth and contamination.

This is untrue on every level, no matter who is making the claim. No chemical on the market can do this without additional cleaning. Just because the bottle says that it "controls" something, does not mean that it prevents further problems. There has to be drying and cleaning to be effective.

Mold is the number one concern after a flood.

Mold should be a concern after water damage of any kind, but the biggest threat to health in a flood is bacteria not mold. Flood water is not rain water or spring water, it is sewage. Every bacteria that lives in the yard, ditch, street or any where outside is now in your home, this includes fecal bacteria such as e.coli. Bacteria needs to be treated. The home should be treated for bacteria and cleaned for mold.

I can open the doors or turn on the air conditioner and the house will dry.

Your air conditioner is a dehumidifier, but it is not near large enough or specialized enough to handle this amount of water. Outside air is usually as wet as the indoor air in Louisiana, so it can not be expected to dry the structure either. You need mechanical drying equipment to dry the home.

Please let us know if there is any other way that we can be of assistance.

Sincerely yours,

RTC of Louisiana, LLC
