

After the flood

There are a lot of things to consider when returning home after a flood. You need to take precautions to ensure the safety and wellbeing of yourself and your family.

Use the checklist below to help guide you through the flood clean-up process:

- Clean up and disinfect contaminated areas.** Flooding can cause sewage to overflow into your home, and contact with sewage can make people sick. Keep children and pets away until the area is cleaned up.
- Drain water to prevent mosquitos.** Mosquitoes can breed rapidly in stagnant waters. Drain any water from containers such as plant pots, tyres, buckets, and roof gutters to control mosquitos around your home.
- Clean up mould growth.** Ensure the following groups of people are not present when you clean up mould: children (under 12 years, particularly babies), pregnant women, people over 65 years of age and people with weakened immune systems, allergies, severe asthma or lung diseases.
- If you suffer a cut or wound during clean up, clean it and call your doctor immediately.** Skin contact with floodwater and mud from floodwater can cause illness and skin infections.
- Be aware of trapped animals.** Wild animals like rodents, snakes or spiders may be trapped in your home, shed or garden.
- Do not use water that looks, tastes or smells unusual** – this includes drinking it, preparing food with it or giving it to animals. Your private water supplies could be contaminated from floodwater, debris and chemicals.
- Use bottled water.** Boiling water will not make it safe to drink.
- Do not walk or drive over wastewater systems.** Waste water systems (including septic tanks and their absorption areas) can be weakened by a flood so do not drive or walk over them.
- Throw away flood damaged food** including canned and packaged foods.
- Take care with gas and electricity supplies.** Damaged gas or electricity supplies need to be declared safe by a qualified electrician or plumber.
- Take care with medicines as they may be contaminated.** Medicines stored at home and affected by flood water may now be unsafe and extreme caution should be taken in trying to salvage any medicines.
- Look after your pets.** If your pets are injured, seek veterinary treatment immediately. If your pets are lost, notify your local council, microchip registry, neighbours and nearby animal shelters.
- Assess the damage on your farm.** Assess damage to your property, animals, crops, infrastructure including dams, irrigation, drainage, fencing and access. Prioritise areas for immediate action and list those requiring attention in the future.
- Look after your livestock.** If you have any animal health related enquiries or concerns for your livestock, contact Agriculture Victoria's Customer Service Centre (136 186) or your local vet. Ask you council for advice on disposing of dead livestock.
- Flood recovery for your farm.** Agriculture Victoria is currently contacting flood affected farmers across Victoria by telephone to assess the damage to properties and agricultural assets and to provide information and advice on farm recovery. If you wish to speak to a staff member about your particular flood recovery requirements, contact Agricultural Victoria's Customer Service Centre **136 186**.
- Fence damage.** Conventional fences with many posts and wires tend to be worst affected. Single and dual wire electric fences do not trap the same amount of debris and are more easily repaired. Replacement of fences should be covered by your insurance. If your fence borders a waterway, there may be assistance through your Catchment Management Authority.
- Road closures.** Current information around road closures is available at the VicRoads website: www.traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au. Work is being done to ensure roads are safe and reopened as soon as possible.