



Ohio Department of Health Bureau of Environmental Health

Know what to do after a Sewage Back-up

Bob Taft, Governor

“To improve and protect the health of all Ohioians”

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How to Clean up After Sewage Backup –

Heavy storms, blockages, breakdowns in sewer pipes or septic tanks, or a flooded leach field can cause sewage to back up into basement floor drains. Children and pets should be kept out of the flooded area until it has been properly cleaned and disinfected.

- Always protect yourself and wear boots and gloves during removal and cleanup.
- Wash contaminated surfaces and objects with warm soapy water and disinfect with a bleach/water solution (one cap of chlorine bleach to one gallon of water).
- Either dispose or properly wash and disinfect toys, clothing, and other contaminated objects.
- Wash your hands with soap and water when you finish or between breaks.

How to Prevent Disease after a Sewage Backup –

Sewage has the potential of carrying disease causing pathogens that cause diarrhea and other diseases such as, Hepatitis, Salmonella, Cholera, and Giardia.

- Avoid skin contact with sewage, especially cuts and sores.
- Keep dry by wearing boots and gloves. If your skin becomes contaminated, wash with warm and soapy water.
- Keep children and pets out of the area until it has been properly cleaned and disinfected.
- Do not eat anything that has been exposed to sewer water.
- Keep contaminated objects away from mucous membranes (mouth, eyes, and nose).

Think Safety During Clean up –

Safety must always be considered during the clean up process. Wet surfaces can be slippery. Cleaning solutions can be hazardous or fatal if abused.

- Read and follow directions on bleach.
- Never mix cleaning products.
- Do not use ammonia.
- Ventilate area if possible.

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