



Water Damage Cleanup and Mold Prevention

The following guidelines present strategies to respond to water damage within 24-48 hours. These guidelines are designed to help avoid the need for remediation of mold growth by taking quick action before growth starts. Depending on the size of the area involved and resources available, professional assistance may be needed to dry an area quickly and thoroughly. If mold growth is found on the materials listed below, remediation procedures may be necessary. Contact the Area Manager/Capital Planning or the Occupational Health and Safety Officer for guidance on remediation.

Guidelines for Response to Clean Water Damage Within 24 – 28 Hours to Prevent Mold Growth:

| Water-Damaged Material: | Actions: |
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| Books and papers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For non-valuable items, discard books and papers.• Photocopy valuable/important items. Discard originals.• Freeze (in frost-free freezer or meat locker) or freeze-dry (this will kill most mold spores). |
| Carpet and backing – dry within 24 – 48 hours ** | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove water with water extraction vacuum.• Reduce ambient humidity levels with dehumidifier.• Accelerate drying process with fans. |
| Ceiling tiles | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discard and replace. |
| Cellulose insulation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discard and replace. |
| Concrete or cinder block surfaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove water with wet/dry vacuum.• Accelerate drying process with dehumidifiers, fans, and/or heaters. |
| Fiberglass insulation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discard and replace. |
| Hard surface, porous flooring (Linoleum, ceramic tile, vinyl) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vacuum or damp wipe with water and mild detergent and allow to dry. Scrub if necessary.• If possible, (carpet) check to make sure subflooring is dry; dry subflooring if necessary and possible. |
| Non-porous, hard surfaces (Plastics, metals) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vacuum or damp wipe with water and mild detergent and allow to dry. Scrub if necessary. |



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| Upholstered furniture | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove water with wet/dry vacuum.• Accelerate drying process with dehumidifiers, fans, and/or heaters. |
| Wallboard (Drywall and gypsum board) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May be dried in place if there is no obvious swelling and the seams are intact. If not, remove, discard, and replace.• Ventilate the wall cavity, if possible. |
| Window drapes | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow laundering or cleaning instructions recommended by the manufacturer. |
| Wood surfaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove moisture immediately and use dehumidifiers, gentle heat, and fans for drying. (Use caution when applying heat to hardwood floors.)• Treated or finished wood surfaces may be cleaned with mild detergent and clean water and allowed to dry.• Wet paneling should be pried away from wall for drying. |

Even if materials are dried within 48 hours, mold growth may have occurred. Items may be tested by professionals if there is doubt. If there is doubt regarding the possibility of mold growth, the Area Manager and Capital Planning shall be contacted. Note that mold growth will not always occur after 48 hours; this is only a guideline.

These guidelines are for damage caused by clean water. If you know or suspect that the water source is contaminated with sewage or chemical or biological pollutants, then Personal Protective Equipment and containment are required by Workplace Safety and Health legislation. The Area Manager shall be contacted if the water is suspected to be contaminated. An experienced professional should be consulted if you and/or your remediators do not have expertise remediating in contaminated water situations. Do not use fans before determining that the water is clean or sanitary.

** The subfloor under the carpet or other flooring material must also be cleaned and dried.