

# **FLOODING: EMERGENCY MEASURES & RECOVERY ACTIONS**

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Remember flooding can cause significant damage and pose numerous risks to affected properties and assets. If you are in any doubt or unsure if it is safe to carry out any of the following actions leave it to professionals and experts!

## **GENERAL SAFETY ADVICE**

- Ensure your own safety and the safety of others when undertaking any activities
- Cordon off and prevent access to any areas that may pose a risk to you or others
- Unless advised otherwise ensure that your property remains secured and locked
- Keep safe/secure all valuables, personal and important documentation and sentimental items
- Wear appropriate protective equipment (e.g. gloves) when handling contaminated items
- Keep children and pets away from hazardous areas, items and equipment at all times
- If affected DO NOT switch back on your electrical supply or use electrical items or gas supply, unless tested by a competent person and certified safe
- Be aware of hazards such as waterborne bacteria and pathogens and exposed asbestos caused by the damage

## **INSURANCE CLAIMS ADVICE**

- Locate and familiarise yourself with your insurance documentation, policy cover details and claim notification process so you are clear on what may be covered and how to claim
- We recommend documenting damage for your own records to support and assist your claim (e.g. inventories, photos, videos)
- If making an insurance claim, notify your insurer as quickly as possible, following their instructions and advise and liaise with any third parties (e.g. Loss Adjuster)

## **BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES**

- Remove damaged fabric items such as sofas, curtains & carpets
- Remove any fittings and materials damaged unrestorable or beyond economic repair such as laminate flooring, skirtings and architraves, plaster board and insulation
- Raise all remaining pieces of furniture and equipment off the floor using wooden blocks or pallets.
- Remove and standing water using pumps and wet vacs
- Clean all affected floors, walls, surfaces and voids (e.g. trunking/ducts) where possible using appropriate detergents and disinfectants
- Install appropriate drying systems that generate air movement and dehumidification of affected areas

## **ELECTRONIC INSTALLATIONS, EQUIPMENT & MACHINERY**

- If not already done immediately - switch off and isolate all electrical/electronic systems affected
- Disconnect any emergency power supplies (batteries or UPSs) that may exist. N.B.: take into account all safety matters relating to lifts, access-control systems and electrically secured escape routes and business critical functions
- Disconnect any pc boards fitted with backup batteries (e.g. on memory chips)
- Use appropriate cleaning processes and chemicals to remove all contamination
- Use compressed air to blow dry electronic installations, machinery and damp parts (Caution: the temperature of electronic components must not exceed 50 – 60 °C!)
- Remove all traces of moisture from affected items using a specialist Vacuum Drying Oven
- For machinery items apply anti-corrosion agents to metallic surfaces
- For affected data media, consult a specialist company such as BELFOR

## **DOCUMENTS, FILES & BOOKS**

- Keep documents damp/moist and cool (e.g. seal/wrap in plastic bags or containers), do not attempt to dry them
- Do not separate or split up any documents/files, etc.
- Damaged documents, paper and books should be deep-frozen down to –25 °C as quickly as possible to prevent further structural damage and mould growth
- Triage (identify, sort and prioritise) your most important/critical items systematically
- Remove all traces of moisture using a specialist Thermal Vacuum Freeze Drying Chamber
- Undertake specialist decontamination using appropriate detergents and disinfectants
- Re-process (e.g. trim, press and re-package/file) dried and decontaminated items