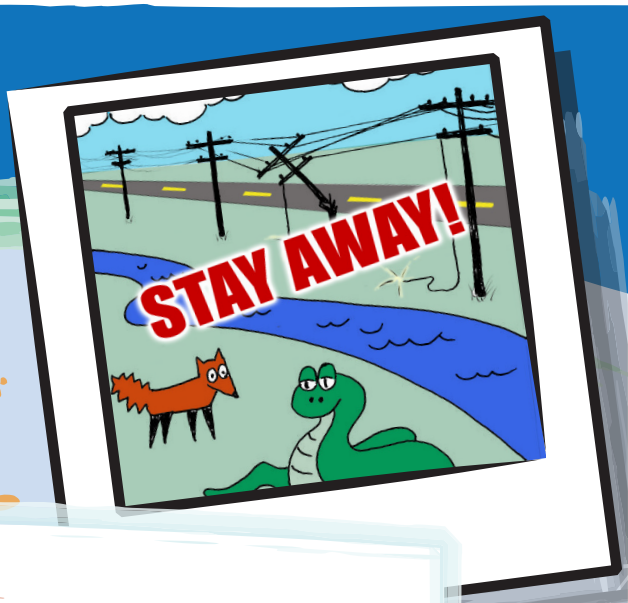
CDC SAFER · HEALTHIER · PEOPLE™

ATSDR AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND DISEASE REGISTRY




# The flood is over! What do you do now?

You may be surprised by what you find when you get back home after a flood. Water may still be standing in your yard or your house. Many of your belongings may be damaged or destroyed. There will be changes in your house, your yard and your neighborhood. Some of those changes may hurt you, but you can learn how to be safe in your home and outdoors.

## Be careful outdoors.

When you go home, you will want to go outside to play. But there may be new hazards outside that you need to watch out for:

**Power lines** — Sometimes power lines fall into a yard or a street during a storm. Never touch or move any power lines because they still have electricity and can hurt you. Tell an adult about any downed power lines.

**Puddles, rivers and streams** — They may look like fun to play in, but after a flood they can be deeper than they look and can be dangerous.

**Animals** — After a flood, you may find creatures in your house and yard that weren't there before, like insects and spiders, stray dogs, wild animals or even your best friend's horse! Follow these rules to stay safe with animals:

- ☒ **Stay away from strange dogs and cats.** They may be lost and scared and may bite you even though you are trying to help them.
- ☒ **If you find your dog or cat, wait and let it come to you. Then get an adult to check it.**
- ☒ **If you see a snake, don't touch it and tell an adult right away.** Most snakes are not poisonous and some are even protected by law, but it is best to be cautious.
- ☒ **Stay away from wild animals, because they can hurt you or make you sick.** Usually raccoons, rats, squirrels and other wild animals stay away from humans. But after a flood they may come near you because they are looking for food.
- ☒ It is normal to see a lot of spiders and insects after a flood, especially mosquitoes. **You can protect yourself from bites by wearing long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Let adults help you use a bug spray that contains DEET. Do not play in or near puddles or anywhere there is water standing nearby.**
- ☒ **Do not touch dead animals.** Call an adult to bury the animal or to put the animal in a sealed trash bag as quickly as possible. If you live on a farm and must handle dead animals, be sure to wear gloves and wash your hands afterward.
- ☑ **WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN. If you touch anything that has been in the flood water, be sure to wash your hands with soap and water or gel before eating or even putting your hands near your face. If flood water touches cuts and scrapes, wash them right away.**