

City of Conway

Repairing Flooded Buildings

1. Before you go back to your building, read “Flood Safety” on the back cover of *Repairing Your Flooded Home*. See also Steps 1 and 2 in that book. You may not want to go into your building until the City’s inspector is with you.
2. What you have to do to repair a flooded building depends on how high the water got:
 - 2.1. A building that was *flooded in the crawlspace only*, will need to have the following repairs made:
 1. If water got in the furnace, air conditioner, electrical box or outlets and/or water heater, they must either be replaced or cleaned and certified by a professional, licensed by the State and the City.
 2. All flooded ductwork must be disassembled and discarded.
 3. Hose out the crawlspace. Clean all exposed surfaces with a disinfectant (see Step 6 of *Repairing Your Flooded Home*).
 4. It is *highly recommended* that you have the replacement utilities relocated to above the first floor. You may be able to receive financial assistance to do this from FEMA. The FEMA inspector will determine what assistance will be available.
 - 2.2. If floodwaters got *inside your building* or damaged the floor joists in the crawlspace, you must do the following:
 1. If your house has a crawlspace, or if water got in the furnace, air conditioner, electrical box or outlets and/or water heater, do all the items noted above.
 2. Remove and throw away the following items if they got wet:
 - ductwork
 - carpeting and carpet pads
 - sheetrock
 - insulation
 - particle board, pressboard, Masonite, and similar wood composition products
 - wallpaper over plaster
 3. Disconnect and throw away all electrical outlets and switches that are below the high water line.
 4. Hose out the building to remove the mud as explained on pages 9 - 10 of *Repairing Your Flooded Home*. Clean all exposed surfaces with a disinfectant (see Step 6 of *Repairing Your Flooded Home*).

5. Allow air to flow around the bare studs and joists so they can dry out. You will not be able to install floor covering, insulation or sheetrock until the wood is sufficiently dry. The inspector will have a meter that will test whether the wood is dry enough. It must have a less than 19% moisture reading. A dehumidifier can help this process if you have a generator or other outside source of electricity.
3. If you got floodwater in your crawlspace or inside your building, you will need four inspections by a City building inspector.
 - 3.1. The first inspection will be to check the level of damage to your building. If the building inspector concludes that the building is not substantially damaged, he will issue a temporary utility permit to allow a licensed electrical and/or mechanical contractor to clean up the furnace, air conditioner, electrical box and/or water heater. You cannot move back in to the building, but you can proceed with cleaning up.
 - 3.2. Due to the fact the water was so dirty and in the building for so long, it could have “wicked” up the sheetrock and insulation several feet higher than the high water line. Therefore, there may be more repairs needed than at first appearance. The building inspector will run the data collected through the FEMA guidelines and will advise the owner if the building is likely to be substantially damaged. If it is, you will be advised to proceed with clean up, but not make repairs until the City’s mitigation plan is completed.
 - 3.3. Sometime after the first inspection, you will need to apply for a building permit to do all the needed repairs. See Section 7 for details on applying for a building permit.
 - 3.4. After the electrical and mechanical clean up has been done, contact the City. A building inspector will check the work and authorize the power to be turned back on.
 - 3.5. After the wallboard, insulation, etc. has been stripped, clean and disinfect the studs and all exposed parts. When the wood is dry enough, call the City. This third inspection is needed before you are allowed to proceed to cover the walls.
 - 3.6. A final inspection will be needed after all the repairs are completed. The inspector will issue a certificate of occupancy. Only after the certificate of occupancy has been issued can you reoccupy the building.
 - 3.7. There is no charge for these inspections or for a permit.
 4. The first inspections will be conducted starting on Thursday, October 7. It will help you identify what needs to be repaired and whether you need a building permit for the repairs. It will also identify if your building could be substantially damaged. If you have a preferred time for this inspection, please call us to arrange an appointment at 248-1726.
 5. Read Step 2 in *Repairing Your Flooded Home*. Before the first inspection, you may proceed with clean up activities and temporary emergency repairs without a permit. These include:

- 5.1. Covering holes in roofs or walls and covering windows to prevent the weather from inflicting further damage.
 - 5.2. Removing sagging ceilings, shoring up broken foundations, and other actions to make the building safe to enter.
 - 5.3. Removing and disposing of damaged contents, carpeting, sheetrock, insulation, etc.
 - 5.4. Hosing, scrubbing, or cleaning floors, walls, cabinets, etc.
6. Take all your trash to the usual curbside garbage pick up location for the City to pick it up. Put your trash in different piles:
- Carpeting, mattresses, furniture, etc.
 - Building materials, wood, insulation, sheetrock, etc.
 - Appliances and metal
 - Yard waste, branches, landscaping materials, etc.
 - Spoiled food, garbage, etc. goes in garbage cans or plastic bags
 - Household hazardous wastes (bleach, drain cleaner, gasoline and pesticide cans, etc.) need to be boxed or bagged separately and marked so it can be handled properly

If you have questions on trash collection call Solid Waste at 248-1730.

7. If the inspector concludes that you will need a building permit for the repairs and reconstruction to be done, he will give you a building permit application form. You must apply for a permit following the regular procedures as explained in *General Requirements for Obtaining Building Permits* with the following changes:
- 7.1. Step 1 in the procedures, the pre-application conference, is held during the first inspection.
 - 7.2. If the permit is for repairs and reconstruction only, and you are not altering the building, skip Step 2 (d) and 2 (h).
 - 7.3. If the permit is for repairs and reconstruction only, and you are not altering the building, construction plans are not needed in Step 3. Submit the contractor's itemized list of repairs to be undertaken.
 - 7.4. In Step 3 and Step 6: there are no fees for plan review or a building permit.
8. A substantially damaged building is one where the cost of repairs and reconstruction is more than 50% of the value of the building. If the inspector determines that your building is substantially damaged, the building must be brought up to code:
- 8.1. If the building is a residence, it must be elevated two feet above the high water line. If it is a non-residential building it must be elevated or dry floodproofed two feet above the high water line. There are financial assistance programs to help pay for this extra protection from future floods. The City will help you apply for them.

- 8.2. If there are several substantially damaged buildings in an area, the City may be interested in converting the area to open space. If there is sufficient property owner interest in selling and relocating, the City will work to obtain state or federal funds to purchase the properties. In this case, do not make any repairs.
- 8.3. If you feel that the building is not substantially damaged, you can appeal the determination. The inspector will have a form and instructions for this. You can submit the appeal to the City's Board of Adjustments.
9. In order to screen out possible opportunists from taking advantage of the current situation, any contracted work must be done by a firm licensed to work in the City. Furthermore, residents are cautioned and warned:
 - 9.1. Do *not* sign blank contracts.
 - 9.2. Do *not* agree to have work performed without first seeing the contractor's license.
 - 9.3. Do *not* allow work or alterations not authorized by the City Building Official.
 - 9.4. Do *not* make the final payment until you are satisfied the work has been done right.

You may also want to ask potential contractors if they are certified by the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification.

For further information, please contact the Building Department at 248-1760