

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

No matter what happens you need to protect important family documents and records. Since water will destroy paper or ruin computers, floods are a great risk to records.

- If practical, original copies of records should be kept in a safe deposit box at a bank, and photocopies used at home.
- Records should be kept in fire-proof and water proof boxes.
- Store them in a safe place, where you can retrieve them quickly.
- Insurance policies should be kept safe (life, health, auto, home).
- Photocopies of drivers licenses and Social Security Cards should be included.
- Family birth and death records should be stored, along with marriage certificates.
- Wills or living wills should be kept safe.
- Passports.
- Mortgage records and property deeds.
- Military records, including DD214s.
- All items should be kept in a container that can be quickly accessed and easily transported.

These documents are critical to your family and need to be preserved. They also will be needed during and after the recovery process.

Also available in the personal and family preparedness series is:

Booklet:

A Guide to Preparedness

Pamphlet:

A Personal and Family Preparedness Plan

Brochures:

Preparing for a Winter Storm

Preparing for a Fire

Preparing for a Flood

Preparing for a Tornado

First Aid Kits

Supplies: A Guide to Having What You May Need

Before and After a Disaster: Things to Think About

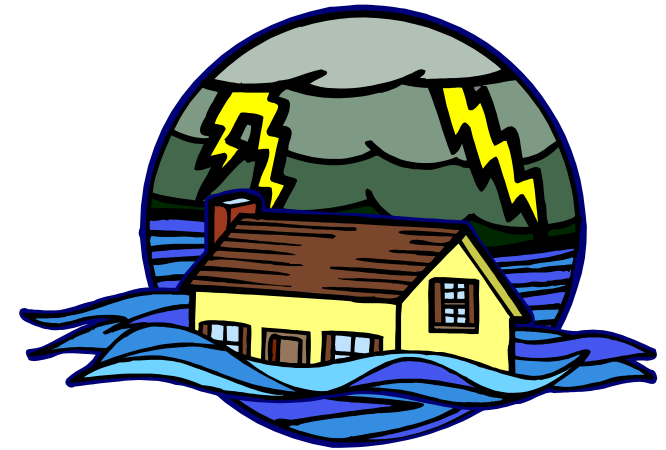
Bird Flu: What You Should Know

This brochure is a publication of the Ross County Health District's **COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS** Program staff.

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Preparing for a FLOOD



Courtesy of the



SUPPLIES

Floods are usually short lived events, but they are difficult to predict and preparing for them should not wait. In the event that a flood causes isolation or the cessation of needed services, prior preparation is critical.

- Pay attention to weather forecasts and advisories.
- A flood watch means a flood is possible, while a warning means flooding is or will take place.
- Items stored in the event of a flood should be put on the second floor or the highest area of the home.
- Battery operated radio: Evacuations or rescue operations may be called for and you will need to know what is taking place.
- Dry blankets, bedding, clothing and other basic necessities should be placed in water-proof bags and stored in areas less likely to be reached by high water.
- A 3-to-7 days supply of water and non-perishable foods should be kept. Again, keep them up where flood waters are less likely to reach them.
- First aid kit (band aids, bandages, medical tape, antibacterial soap, pain relievers, thermometer, antiseptic, scissors and safety pins).
- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- Fire extinguisher.
- Emergency phone numbers.
- Items for infants (diapers, formula).
- Extra prescription medications.

IN THE HOME

If high water reaches your home there are a few things you should know.

- Know where the main breaker is so you can shut down the electricity (to avoid fires).
- Know where the shut off for gas supplies is.
- If you have a sump pump, make sure it is operating.
- If there is no other choice but leaving your home, you should have an escape route planned.
- Any hazardous materials should be kept out of flood waters.
- Make plans to save your pets.
- When possible, valuable items should be moved up and away from flood waters.
- Some homes are in areas more prone to flooding. Is yours?
- If you live in a flood-prone area, you may want to consider installing sewer backflow valves.

TRAVEL

- You should never attempt to travel during a flood.
- Do not drive through flood waters. They may be swift and may have washed away the roadways.
- Do not walk into flood waters. You may be swept away.
- High water can hide potential dangers, which can lead to cuts, bruises and broken bones.

DRYING OUT

Water can cause considerable damage to your home. Taking the proper steps after a flood may save your home and your health.

- First of all, make sure it is safe to go into your home. The power should be off to avoid possible electrocution. Stand in a dry spot and use a wooded stick to shut off main power. Gas should also be off.
- Make sure your home is structurally sound. Check for sagging of the roof and floor, and for bowed walls. Watch for falling plaster or wood.
- Be sure to wear gloves and safety boots.
- Before using water from the tap, make sure it is declared safe by the water company or has been tested by the health department.
- If possible, allow fresh air into your home.
- Water will seep into walls and floors and may need to be drained from certain areas. Mold can grow if these areas remain damp.
- Disinfect any item that was in contact with flood waters.
- Make sure to take photographs or videos of damaged or ruined items. If you have flood insurance this may be the proof you need to collect the proper compensation.

If you are not sure how to dry your home out, contact someone who does.

For detailed directions visit
http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/0,1082,0_570_,00.html.