

Affected by flooding? Here's what to do

Has your HOME been affected? Read this first.

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Mark Mulligan / Houston Chronicle

The streets of Meyerland, like so many others in the Houston area, were full of water Sunday.

- » Unplug appliances and electronics. Use flashlights, not candles, as needed.
- » Remove wet carpets, padding, mattresses and upholstered furniture. Ventilate with fans and air conditioning. Open blinds, but not windows because air encourages mold.
- » If floodwaters reached your walls, remove drywall and insulation 12 to 18 inches above the waterline. If water only reached the baseboards, remove them and drill holes in the bottom of the wall.
- » Disinfect floors with a solution of one part bleach and 10 parts water.
- » If ceilings are sagging, it could be water. Poke holes in side of the sag to release the water, not the middle.

- » If you suspect sewer or waterline damage, don't use toilets or drink tap water. Call a plumber for the sewer and your water provider for the water line.
- » If your home has been flooded, have your electricity checked before attempting to turn it back on.
- » If you smell gas or hear hissing, open a window and leave. Call the gas company.

Protect your documents — if you haven't already, put these into a clear, air-proof and waterproof container that you can take with you if you have to leave.

- » Identification: Passports and Social Security cards.
- » Medical: Prescription information and immunization records.
- » Financial: Customer service phone numbers and account numbers for banks and credit cards.
- » Family records: Birth, marriage and death certificates.
- » More: Insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks, bonds and other valuables.