



Host: Senator Tony Hwang

Extreme Weather & Coastal Resiliency Informational Forum **INFO PACKET**

Our coastline and riverways are at a greater risk of flooding, erosion, and water damage. What impact do these hurricanes, super storms, and flash flooding have on our homes and neighborhoods? What can we do better to prepare, protect, and develop safety plans against these storms?

Join us to learn more from expert speakers.

FEATURED PANALIST:

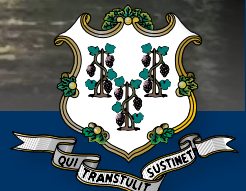
- **Becky Bunnell**
Fairfield Flood & Erosion Control Board
- **Douglas Glowacki**
Emergency Management Program Specialist
- **Emergency Response Expert Invited**
Community Emergency Response Teams
- **Emergency Services Expert Invited**
Fairfield First Responders

*Fairfield 9-13-26 flooding event photo:
Fairfield Fire Department / Facebook*

***The Public is Encouraged to Attend & Offer
Their Experience and Input!***



**For more information, please contact George Vatis:
203-858-6818 or George.Vatis@cga.ct.gov**



BE PREPARED FOR A FLOOD



FEMA

FEMA V-1005/July 2024

Pay attention to local officials and evacuate flooded areas. Entering floodwaters could result in injury or death.

A flood is a temporary overflow of water onto land that is normally dry. It is the most common natural disaster in the world.

Floods . . .



can happen anywhere in the United States and its territories.



can result from rainfall; snowmelt; coastal or tropical storms; storm surge; and overflows of dams and other water systems.



can occur slowly over many days or happen very quickly.



can cause power outages; pollute drinking water systems; and damage homes, buildings, and infrastructure.

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM A FLOOD

Sign up to receive emergency alerts. Follow instructions from local officials.



Turn around, don't drown!
Do not walk, swim or drive through floodwaters.

Plan to evacuate AND be ready to shelter in place.



Move to higher ground or a higher floor to stay above rising floodwaters. Do not become trapped in a basement or attic.

Stay off bridges over fast-moving water. Fast-moving water can wash bridges away without warning.



Purchase flood insurance. Standard insurance policies do not cover flooding. Get flood coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program.



HOW TO STAY SAFE

WHEN A FLOOD THREATENS

Prepare NOW

Know your area's type of flood risk and consider your personal risk of experiencing impacts. Visit FEMA's Flood Map Service Center at <https://msc.fema.gov/portal> for more information.

Sign up to receive emergency alerts and notifications from your local emergency management office. Learn what common alerts and warnings mean before you are impacted by a flood.

Purchase flood insurance. Standard insurance policies do not cover flooding. Get flood coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program.



Have a communication plan to stay connected with family, friends and neighbors during and after a flood. Plan to text or message because you may not be able to make or receive phone calls.

Develop an evacuation plan. Consider where you will go and how you will get there. Practice your evacuation route.

Be ready to shelter in place. Evacuation is not always possible or the safest option.

Gather enough food, water and emergency supplies to last you several days. Consider everyone's specific needs, including medication. Have extra batteries and chargers for mobile devices.

Keep important documents in a dry, safe place such as a fireproof, waterproof container, and create password-protected digital copies.

Protect your property. Move valued items to higher levels. Elevate critical utilities. Install a back valve and a battery-operated sump pump. Declutter drains and gutters. Use sandbags to create a flood barrier.

Survive DURING

Pay attention to weather reports and local news updates and stay alert for potential signs of flash flooding. Follow the instructions in all emergency alert notifications.

Evacuate immediately when ordered to. Do not underestimate the threat of flooding by failing to evacuate when it is safe to do so. Take critical supplies and documents with you when you evacuate.

Move to higher ground or the highest level of a building to avoid becoming trapped by rising floodwater but do not climb into a closed attic.

Do not attempt to cross floodwaters. Floodwater can pose a drowning risk for everyone — regardless of their ability to swim.

Do not drive through floodwaters. The depth of the water is not always obvious and just a foot of moving water can sweep a vehicle — even a sports utility vehicle — off the road.

Do not drive into underground roads or through tunnels during a flood.

Never drive around barriers blocking a flooded road. Floodwaters may have damaged the road or made it unsafe.

Be Safe AFTER

After an evacuation, return to your home only after local officials have said it is safe to do so. Pay attention to and follow guidance from local officials.

Do not assume your drinking water is safe to use or consume after a flood. Check with your local health department.

Stay away from floodwater. It may contain hazards, including sharp objects, downed power lines, sewage, bacteria, chemicals, diseased insects and wild or stray animals.

Be careful when going outdoors after a flood. Be alert for downed or unstable trees, utility poles and power lines.

Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water.

Only use generators and other fuel-burning equipment outdoors and at least 20 feet away from building openings like windows, doors or garages to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.

Before attempting to clean up debris or repair any property damaged by a flood, hire a qualified flood adjuster. Remember to wear protective gear when you clean up flood debris.

Document any property damage with photographs. Contact your flood insurer to file a flood insurance claim. Register with FEMA for additional assistance.



FEMA

FEMA V-1005

Take an Active Role in Your Safety

Visit Ready.gov/floods and use FEMA's **A Guide for Alerts and Warnings** at <https://go.dhs.gov/3nN> to learn more about flood watches and warnings. Download the free **FEMA app** to get more information about how to prepare.



FEMA



National Institutes
of Health

HOMEOWNER'S AND RENTER'S GUIDE TO MOLD CLEANUP AFTER DISASTERS



Cleaning up after a flood can pose health risks. You and your family should wait to re-enter your home until professionals tell you it is safe, with no structural, electrical or other hazards.

Before you start cleanup activities, contact your insurance company and take pictures of the home and your belongings. Remember – drying your home and removing water-damaged items is your most important step for preventing mold damage.

IS THERE A PROBLEM?

Was your home flooded? If so, and you were not able to dry your home (including furniture and other items) within 24-48 hours, you should assume you have mold growth. You need to *completely* dry everything, clean up the mold, and make sure you don't still have a moisture problem.

You may see or smell mold on clothing, drywall, furniture, cardboard boxes, or books, but it may also be hidden under or behind items like carpet, cushions, or walls.

MOLD BASICS: HOW MOLDS CAN AFFECT YOUR HEALTH

Exposure to mold can lead to asthma attacks, eye and skin irritation, and allergic reactions. It can lead to severe infections in people with weakened immune systems. Avoid contaminated buildings and contaminated water as much as you can.

KEY MESSAGES

- Wear personal protective equipment. Wear an N-95 respirator at a minimum, goggles, and protective gloves.
- Use portable generators carefully, outside and away from the home, to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning and fires.
- Ensure the mold cleanup is complete before reoccupying your home.

Flood water may have carried sewage or chemicals into your home. This could expose you or your family to viruses, bacteria, disease carriers (such as mosquitos), and parasites, as well as mold. To learn more about cleaning and disinfection go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/flood/standing.html>

You can protect yourself and your family from mold exposure by following these steps.

BEFORE YOU ENTER ANY MOLDY SITE:

- **Protect yourself and loved ones against hazards.** People with breathing problems like asthma or who have weakened immune systems should stay away from moldy sites. Children should not take part in disaster cleanup work. Check for loose power lines or gas leaks. Make sure the electricity and gas are turned off. Look for sagging ceilings or floors or other structural problems. Watch out for wet, muddy, or slippery floors.
- **Protect your mouth and nose** against breathing in mold: wear at least an N-95 respirator. If you plan to spend a lot of time removing moldy belongings or doing work like ripping out moldy drywall, wear a half-face or full-face respirator. Basic information on using it is in [OSHA's general respiratory protection guidance](#).
- **Protect your skin.** Wear protective gloves (non-latex, vinyl, nitrile, or rubber). Do not touch mold or moldy items with bare hands.
- **Protect your eyes.** Wear goggles that provide *complete* eye protection. Choose goggles designed to keep out dust and small particles. Safety glasses or goggles that have open vent holes will not protect you against dust and small particles.



AFTER YOU LEAVE A MOLD SITE:

- **Protect yourself and loved ones.** Shower and change your clothes. This will help you avoid carrying mold and other hazards back to your current living quarters.

SHOULD I DO THIS MYSELF?

This job may be too difficult or dangerous for you. It may be best to get help from experienced and qualified professionals if you can. Hire a mold inspection or remediation professional affiliated with or certified by the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA), the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA), the Institute of

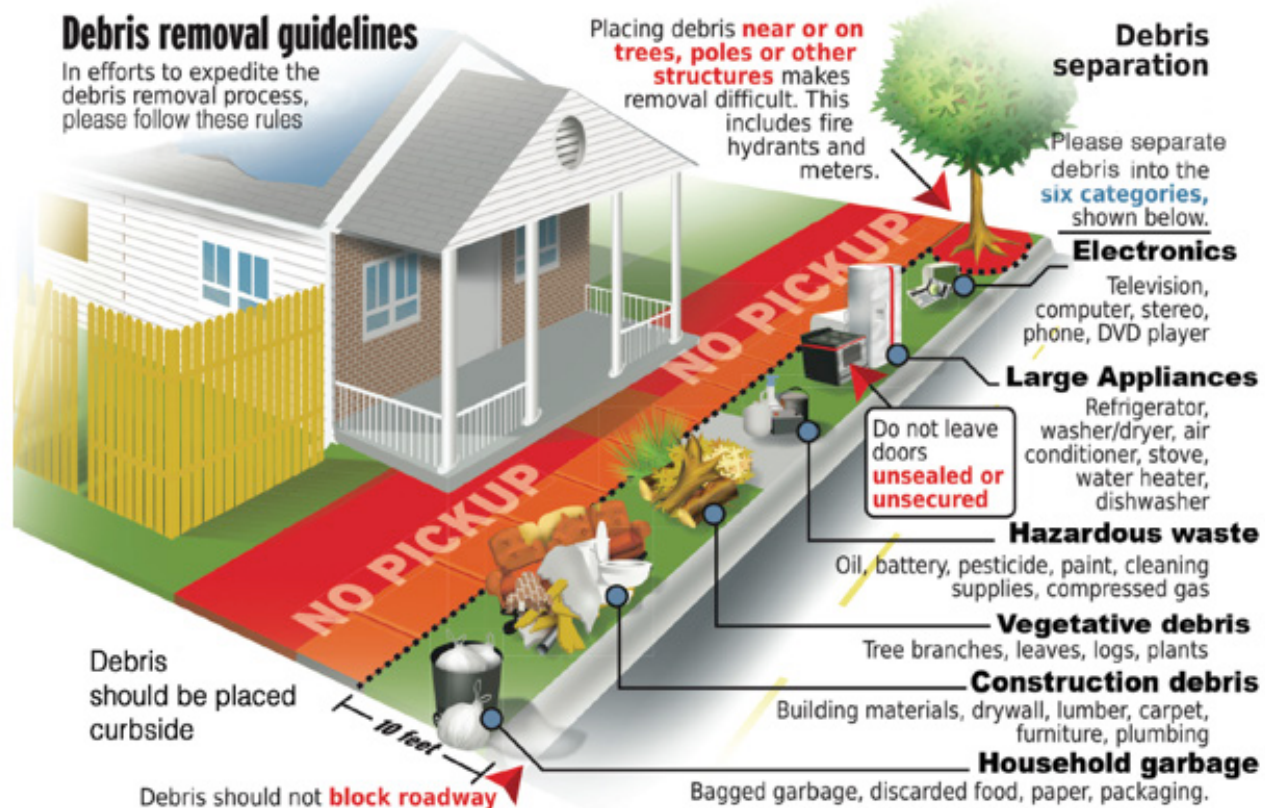
Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC), or American Council for Accredited Certification (ACAC) to inspect, repair, and restore the damaged parts of your home. Your state also may regulate mold remediation.

Sampling for mold is not usually recommended. Understanding the results can be difficult, and no matter what kind of mold is in your home, you need to clean it up and fix the moisture problem.

IF I MUST DO THIS MYSELF, HOW CAN I DO IT SAFELY?

Follow these steps:

1. Put on the personal protective equipment described above to protect your eyes, nose, mouth, and skin.
2. Remove standing water and wet materials. Use a wet vacuum to remove water from floors, carpets, and hard surfaces. Dry your home and everything in it as quickly as you can – within 24 to 48 hours if you can.
3. Open all doors and windows when you are working and leave as many open as is safe when you leave.
 - o Open inside doors, especially closets and interior rooms, to let air flow to all areas. Take doors off their hinges if you need to.
 - o Open kitchen cabinets and bathroom vanity doors; remove drawers, wipe them clean, and stack them to dry.
 - o Open the attic access to let air flow to the attic. Before you open the attic door, make sure nothing will fall on you.
4. When electricity is safe to use, use fans and dehumidifiers to remove moisture. Do not use fans if mold has already started to grow, because the fans may spread the mold.
5. Clean with water and a detergent. Remove all mold you can see. Dry right away.
6. If you use cleaning products, do not mix cleaning products together. DO NOT mix bleach and ammonia because it can create toxic vapors.
7. Painting or caulking over mold will not prevent mold from growing. Fix the water problem completely and clean up all the mold before you paint or caulk.
8. Throw away items that can't be cleaned and dried. Throw away anything that was wet with flood water and can't be cleaned and dried completely within 24 to 48 hours. If you have precious items that you want to preserve, follow these guidelines from the Smithsonian Institute: http://www.si.edu/mci/english/learn_more/taking_care/mnm.html



SAFETY TIPS ON USING PORTABLE GENERATORS

If you use a portable generator for electricity use CAUTION to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning and fires.

- Use portable generators OUTSIDE and at least 20 feet away from buildings.
- Do not use portable generators inside your house or garage.
- Do not put portable generators on balconies or near doors, vents, or windows.
- Do not use portable generators near where you or your children are sleeping.
- Never refuel a generator while it is hot.
- For more information, go to: http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/portable_generator_safety.pdf

AM I DONE?

- If you still see or smell mold, you have more work to do. After a remediation, there should be no signs of water damage or mold growth.
- You may need to ask a mold remediation professional to know whether your mold problem is completely fixed. As noted in the "Should I do this myself?" section, sampling for mold is not usually recommended; instead, a careful inspection of the work area for completion of the cleanup and absence of mold-related odors is usually appropriate.
- If you have health problems that get worse when you return home, like asthma or allergy attacks or skin or eye irritation, you may still have some mold.

LOCAL CONTACT INFO: