



BERRIEN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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PRESS RELEASE

Date and Time: February 25, 2018 at 11:30hrs

Be Safe During Flood Cleanup Efforts

The Berrien County Sheriff's Office Emergency Operations Center wants everyone to be mindful of the dangers involved with water damage and take the necessary precautions."

Cleanup Safety Tips

Residents are encouraged to remove flood-damaged items and clean basements safely. To stay safe when cleaning up after a flood:

- **Cleanup and prevent mold growth.** Cleanup and dry out the building quickly. Open doors and windows. Use fans to dry out the building. To PREVENT [mold growth](#), clean wet items and surfaces with detergent and water. To REMOVE mold growth, wear rubber gloves, open windows and doors and clean with a bleach solution of one cup of bleach in one gallon of water. Throw away porous items (for example, carpet and upholstered furniture) that cannot be dried quickly.
- **Pace yourself and get support.** Be alert to physical and emotional exhaustion or strain. Set priorities for cleanup tasks and pace the work. Try not to work alone. Don't get exhausted. Ask your family members, friends or professionals for support. If needed, seek professional help.
- **Prevent musculoskeletal injuries.** Use teams of two or more people to move bulky objects. Avoid lifting any material that weighs more than 50 pounds (per person). Wear protective gear for cleanup work. Wear hard hats, goggles, heavy work gloves and watertight boots with steel toes and insoles (not just steel shank). Wear earplugs or protective headphones to reduce risk from equipment noise.
- **Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.** Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas produced by many types of equipment and is poisonous to breathe. Do not use a pressure washer or generator inside your home. If your carbon monoxide detector sounds, leave your home immediately and call 911. Seek prompt medical attention if you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning and are feeling dizzy, light-headed or nauseated.

Call 2-1-1 for Guidance and Assistance. Residents who experienced personal property loss and need assistance should call 2-1-1, which can assist with looking into possible resources available from nonprofit and government organizations. Based on the type of assistance and services needed, 2-1-1 operators can help citizens acquire items such as food and water, clothes, medication, cleaning supplies and volunteer assistance. Staffed by trained specialists, 2-1-1 is a free community referral service available 24 hours a day with multilingual capabilities.

. The public is encouraged to monitor local media for up-to-date weather reports and emergency information.

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