Reopening Your Food Establishment after Flooding

**Inspection**
It is the responsibility of the Manager or operator to conduct a complete self-inspection to ensure that normal operations can be resumed safely and without compromising food safety.

**Sanitizing**
Proper decontamination will eliminate harmful microorganisms, chemical residues, or filth that could pose a food safety risk. Decontamination and sanitization procedures using chemical sanitization should be used on equipment and structural surfaces that are salvageable. Chemical sanitizers include:

- chlorine bleach at a concentration of 100 - 200 ppm (approximately one tablespoon of bleach in one gallon of potable water), or
- quaternary ammonium at a concentration of 200 ppm, or
- other approved sanitizers

**Damaged Food Products**
- Discard and remove all food and packaging materials that may have been submerged in floodwaters or affected by moisture, unless the food is sealed in a hermetically sealed container that has not been damaged.
- Destroy refrigerated and frozen foods which have completely thawed or have spent an unknown amount of time in refrigerators without power. **If in doubt, throw it out.**
- Inspect canned foods and discard any food in damaged cans.
- Do not keep products in containers with screw-caps, snap-lids, crimped-caps (soda pop bottles), twist-caps, flip-tops, snap-opens, and similar type closures that have been submerged in flood waters.
- Do not salvage food packed in plastic, paper, cardboard, cloth, and similar containers that have been water damaged or have absorbed moisture.
- Save undamaged, commercially prepared foods in all-metal cans or retort pouches. If you remove labels that can come off, thoroughly wash the cans, rinse them, and then disinfect them with a sanitizing solution. Re-label containers that had the labels removed, including the expiration date, with a marker.

**Physical Facilities**
- If you have a well that has been flooded, ensure it is super-chlorinated (shocked) and tested to confirm it is safe after flood waters recede. Further information on well treatment is available on the AHS website.
- Thoroughly wash all facility interior surfaces (e.g., floors, walls, and ceilings), using potable water, with a hot detergent solution, rinsed free of detergents and residues, and treated with a sanitizing solution.
- Mould contamination is a concern. Structural components of the building (e.g., walls, piping, ceiling, and HVAC system/ventilation systems) affected by flood waters should be cleaned, repaired, and disinfected, where possible.

For more information, visit Safe Healthy Environments
[ahs.ca/eph](https://ahs.ca/eph)
• Remove and destroy all absorbent materials (carpet, drywall, etc.) that has been waterdamaged.
• Dry all remaining structural components as quickly as possible. Do not close up any new construction until after the structural components are dry.

Equipment
• Use a commercial dishwasher or three compartment sink to wash, rinse, and sanitizeequipment and utensils, using potable water.
• Run the empty dishwasher through the wash-rinse-sanitize cycle three times to flush thewater lines and clean and sanitize the dishwasher inside before washing equipment and utensils in it.
• Clear refrigeration units, like coolers and freezers, of all contaminated food products. Cleanand sanitize refrigeration units.
• Check insulation of refrigeration units for flood damage.
• Discard equipment that has been damaged beyond repair.
• Thoroughly clean and sanitized all countertops, equipment including ice machines and non-food contact surfaces.
• Thoroughly clean and sanitize all sinks before using them.

Maintaining Food Temperatures
• Verify that all refrigerated and freezer display cases, walk-in refrigerators, and walk-in freezers are capable of consistently maintaining cold holding temperatures (no warmer than 4°C or keep in a frozen state) before replacement food items are placed in the units.
• Verify that all equipment used for food preparation (e.g., cooking, cooling, and reheating) is functioning properly.

Pest Control
• Verify that you do not have a pest infestation.

Employees
• Ensure handwashing basins are operational, stocked with hand soap and paper towels, and accessible.
• Confirm your employee illness procedures with your staff.

Contact us at 1-833-476-4743 or submit a request online at ahs.ca/eph.