

Ehrlich

A Rentokil Steritech Company

Your Local Pest Control Experts

HURRICANE RECOVERY TIPS



Hurricanes and the conditions that follow, including flooding and scattered debris, can create safety hazards and situations that are conducive to pest infestations. The following hurricane pest control tips may be useful to homes and businesses engaged in hurricane and flooding clean up and recovery efforts.



PERSONAL SAFETY

- Limit exposure to flood waters. If you must work in or near flood waters, use protective equipment, including boots, gloves, eye protection, etc.
- Flood waters can be contaminated with human and animal waste, fuel, chemicals, and other toxins.
- Pests can inhabit flood waters. Watch out for snakes, fire ants, rodents, and more.
- Fire ants can float in “rafts” on flood waters. Do not attempt to treat ants in flood waters with pesticides, which will only contaminate flood waters.



MOSQUITO CONCERNS

- Mosquito activity can increase significantly in the days and weeks after a hurricane, due to the presence of standing water. Mosquitoes can spread West Nile virus and Zika virus, among other harmful diseases.
- If you are outdoors or working in indoor areas that have lost screens and doors, wear insect repellent. Apply repellent to both exposed skin and clothing. Reapply as necessary.
- Use only EPA-approved insect repellents that contain active ingredients of DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus.
- Wear long sleeves, long pants, and socks if you are outside.
- Mosquitoes are most active from dusk until dawn. Be especially cautious during these hours.



GENERAL PEST-RELATED SANITATION AND STRUCTURAL TIPS

- Repair or replace screens that were damaged or blown away to keep insects out during clean up.
- Remove and discard saturated carpets.
- Structural damage, especially from moisture, can allow pests to enter and attack homes or businesses. Repair structural damage such as holes, gaps, or weakened wood as soon as possible.
- Remove standing water.
- Downed trees, branches, and other organic debris (leaf piles, etc.) in exterior areas can create a harborage, nesting, or breeding ground for pests. Remove debris if possible.

Ehrlich is here to help you with hurricane recovery. Our lines are open to assist you.

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SANITATION AND STRUCTURAL TIPS (CONT)

- Relocate trash and other debris to a distance from structures, as they can attract pests and wildlife.
- Moisture problems can be a significant issue after hurricanes. Excess moisture can attract pests, create air quality issues, and cause mold issues. Have a moisture inspection done or speak with a mold remediation expert.
- Clogged gutters can create pest harborage and contribute to moisture issues. Remove debris from gutters to be sure they flow freely.
- Clear debris from storm drains to allow water to flow freely.

FOOD SAFETY CONCERNS



FOR HOMES

- All food contact surfaces must be disinfected before use.
- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines recommend a disinfection solution of 1 Tablespoon of household bleach (unscented) in 1 gallon of clean water to disinfect surfaces.
 - Wash first in soapy water, rinse with clean water, then immerse in bleach solution for 15 minutes.
- Flood waters are contaminated, so any surfaces or foods that contact flood waters must be evaluated, disinfected, or discarded.
- Discard porous food contact surfaces such as wood cutting boards, baby bottle nipples and pacifiers, and paper products.

- All plates, dishes, pots and pans, and utensils must be disinfected before use.
- Unpackaged food that has contacted flood water must be discarded. If you are not sure, discard it.
- Raw foods, such as vegetables and fruits, that have contacted flood waters must be discarded.
- Food in porous food packaging that may have contacted flood waters should be discarded. Examples: pasta and cereal in cardboard packaging, drinks with screw-cap lids, flour in bags, etc.
- Canned foods should be inspected carefully. Any cans that have damage to seams, appear to be dented or swelled, should be tossed.
- Cans with snap tops, pull tops and home canned foods should be discarded.
- Some canned foods with no damage can be saved. However, labels should be removed and cans should be thoroughly disinfected.
- The CDC recommends using 1 cup of bleach (unscented) into 5 gallons of water and putting cans in the water for 15 minutes and then allow to air dry. Relabel can with a marker.
- Power disruptions can impact the safety of refrigerated food. You will need to discard food if it was out of temperature for any length of time.
- Frozen foods that have thawed to a temperature of above 41°F for more than four hours must be discarded.



Ehrlich experts can assist with these post-hurricane services:

- **Pest control**
- **Rodent and wildlife exclusion**
- **Mosquito services**
- **Termite control**
- **Moisture inspection**
- **Insulation services***

**not available in all areas*

- If frozen food is still below 41°F and has not been exposed to flood water, it may be refrozen.
- If you are unsure how long a frozen food was above 41°F, discard it.
- Foods in gardens that have contacted flood waters cannot be used for human consumption.



FOOD SAFETY CONCERNS FOR BUSINESSES

- Food businesses may face unique circumstances when assessing the ability to reopen.
- The food safety experts at Steritech have a complete list of tips, sanitation, and food safety steps for food businesses following power outages and flooding. We encourage you to visit www.steritech.com for further assistance.

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