SQUAMISH - LILLOOET
REGIONAL DISTRICT

Returning home after a flood

A recovery guide for residents and property owners

November 2026



Read this first

> **Do not return until it is safe:** An evacuation order must be rescinded before you return. Follow the route, access and timing directions provided for your community. Do not take shortcuts or enter a restricted area.

Use this guide with the current re-entry directions issued for your community. Conditions, access and available services may vary by incident.

This guide provides general health, safety and recovery information for people returning to flood-affected properties in the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD). Follow any site-specific direction from the SLRD, your local government, First Nation, health authority, utility provider, or other responsible agency.

Your property and neighbourhood may look very different. Hazards may remain even after a flood, including damaged structures and utilities, contaminated water, damaged septic systems, mold, unstable slopes and renewed flood activity.

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STARTING RECOVERY CHECKLIST

Recovery from a flood can be overwhelming. It is normal to be anxious to get back to ordinary life as soon as possible. **Remember that safety is a priority and take it one step at a time.** Use this quick checklist to get started, and find more detailed information for each step in the rest of this guide.

> **Pause before entering:** Look at the property from a safe distance. Call 9-1-1 if you see an immediate threat to life or safety. Leave the area if you smell gas or propane, see downed power lines, unstable structures or other serious hazards.

- ❑ **Make sure it is safe to enter**
  Do not enter a building if floodwater remains in or around it, or if you see buckled walls or floors or any signs of significant structural damage.
- ❑ **Watch for electrical and gas hazards**
  Do not turn electrical or gas equipment back on if potentially affected by floodwater. Have damaged equipment inspected by a licensed professional. Avoid damaged or fallen power lines, poles, downed wires.
- ❑ **Document the damage**
  Take photos and videos of damage to your home, property and belongings before cleanup. Make a list of damaged items and keep receipts related to cleanup, repairs or temporary accommodation.
- ❑ **Contact your insurance provider**
  Contact your insurer as soon as possible, before you begin cleaning. Ask what your policy covers, what documentation is required, and what you should do before disposing of damaged items or starting repairs.
- ❑ **Clean up and dry out**
  Once safe, remove floodwater, wet materials and debris. Drain flooded basements gradually (one-third per day) to reduce structural damage. Aim to dry your home within 48 hours to prevent mold. Wear protective footwear and gloves, keep animals away, and safely dispose of contaminated food and hazardous materials.
- ❑ **If you use a private well, do not assume the water is safe**
  Floodwater can compromise wells and groundwater/aquifers. Use a safe alternative source of water for drinking, food, infant formula preparation, and brushing teeth until your well is assessed and restored.
- ❑ **Septic systems may need to be assessed to ensure safety**
  Flooding can affect your septic system by undermining the soil that supports it. Disinfectants can also affect septic system performance. After the floodwater recedes, seek restoration advice from a professional.
- ❑ **Be aware of health hazards after a flood**
  Floodwater may contain harmful contaminants from agricultural operations and sewage systems. Handle exposed items carefully. Follow health and water instructions from your water supplier and health authority.

More information: Recovering after a flood – PreparedBC | Clean-up after a flood – HealthLink BC

INSURANCE & FINANCIAL RECOVERY

> **Contact your insurance provider right away,** before you start clean-up activities.

If you have insurance

Contact your insurance provider as soon as possible. Be as detailed as possible when providing information. Take photos or video and make a list of damaged or destroyed items before disposing of items or beginning major repairs, unless something presents a health or safety hazard. Keep records and receipts for cleanup, waste disposal, temporary accommodation, repairs and other expenses. Ask your insurance representative about what expenses you may be entitled to and for how long, and what approvals are required before cleanup disposal or repairs.

Insurance coverage varies. Overland flood, sewer backup and groundwater or seepage coverage may be treated differently under your policy. Contact your insurance provider to confirm what coverage you have and what steps you should take when making a claim. If you do not know the name of your insurer or your insurance representative, contact Insurance Bureau of Canada.

> **If you do not know your insurer:** Call the **Insurance Bureau of Canada** Consumer Information Centre at 1-844-227-5422.

More information: Insurance and emergency preparedness – PreparedBC

If you are uninsured or need immediate support

As a first step, all residents and small business owners impacted by an emergency event are encouraged to contact their insurance provider to determine what coverage may be available. If you are not insured, you may consider contacting the Canadian Red Cross, Emergency Support Services, 211 British Columbia and local community organizations.

Provincial funding support depends on the incident, your circumstances and program eligibility.

> **Disaster Financial Assistance:** Following a disaster, the Province may authorize an event for Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA). If authorized, DFA may provide financial assistance for eligible, essential, and **uninsurable** losses resulting from the event. This may include eligible building repairs, replacement of essential personal effects, equipment or inventory, and cleanup and debris removal.

If you have experienced uninsurable impacts or losses from this event, please report them directly to your local government or Indigenous Governing Body.

More information: Disaster Financial Assistance please visit the DFA website.

> **Emergency Support Services:** If you were evacuated and need help with online self-registration, call the B.C. Evacuee Helpline at 1-800-387-4258. Eligibility and available supports are incident specific.

If you are a renter

- Contact your landlord or property manager promptly about flooding, building damage, moisture or mold as soon as possible. PreparedBC advises renters to speak with their landlord about moisture or mold problems, as addressing the problem may be the responsibility of the owner or landlord.
- Photograph damage to your belongings and keep a list of damaged items.
- Contact your tenant insurance provider if you have coverage.
- Keep receipts for temporary accommodation and other additional living expenses.
- Do not turn on electrical or gas equipment that may have been damaged by floodwater.
- If your drinking water is from a private well, ask your landlord to ensure it is safe for drinking water.

> **Check your renter insurance coverage:** Your landlord's insurance does not cover your personal belongings or additional living expenses. Tenant insurance may provide coverage for your belongings and additional living expenses if you cannot stay in your home, depending on your policy.

More information: Insurance and emergency preparedness – PreparedBC

Put together a short-term recovery plan

- Identify immediate safety and health needs
- Gather insurance information and create a process for documentation
- Line up temporary accommodation, if needed, and essential services
- Confirm professional assessments and assistance for cleanup
- Understand guidance and requirements for waste disposal
- Research what is needed for repairs or rebuilding
- Research and confirm what is available for financial, logistical and emotional support

More information: Insurance and emergency preparedness – PreparedBC

RETURNING HOME

When you arrive home

> **Pause before entering:** Look at the property from a safe distance. Call 9-1-1 if you see an immediate threat to life or safety. Leave the area if you smell gas or propane, see downed power lines, unstable structures or other serious hazards.

Inspect the outside first:

- Walk around structures before entering, but stay well back from flood impacted buildings, chimneys and trees.
- Look carefully for fallen or damaged electrical lines, damaged propane or fuel tanks, sharp debris, open wells, damaged septic areas, and unstable slopes.

- Give emergency crews and utility workers room to operate. Drive slowly and follow traffic control.
- Keep children and pets away from standing water and damaged areas.
- Photograph or record video of the property before moving, cleaning or disposing of anything.

Enter with caution:

- Do not enter a building that appears structurally unsafe, smells of gas or propane, has visible structural damage or contains debris.
- If it is safe to enter, confirm the main power breaker is off before inspecting further. If the building, wiring, electrical panel or electrical equipment appears to have been affected by water, do not turn the power back on. Have the electrical system inspected by a licensed electrical contractor first. Wear appropriate protective clothing. Use an N95 respirator adjusted tightly to the face (read instructions on proper usage) and eye protection.
- Look for signs of structural damage, such as cracked or shifted foundations, sagging floors, or doors and windows that no longer close. Have a structural engineer assess it before you begin repairs.
- Check the roof from ground level for visible damage. Do not climb onto a water-damaged roof under any circumstances. Watch out for tripping or falling hazards including wires, debris, uncovered wells and septic tanks.

Hazards that may not be obvious:

- Weakened tree system roots, trunks and falling branches
- Asbestos, lead, treated wood, chemicals or other contaminants in structural debris
- Carbon monoxide from operating pumps, generators or pressure washers in confined or poorly ventilated areas
- Damaged underground electrical, water, fuel or septic infrastructure
- Mold, fiberglass fibres, and other inhalation hazards
- Unstable slopes, rockfall, erosion, flooding and landslides
- Pressurized cylinders, household and vehicle batteries, solvents, paints and garden chemicals damaged by water
- Floodwater rising without warning
- If there is significant water in a basement, PreparedBC recommends draining approximately **one-third of the water per day** to reduce the risk of structural damage

More information: Learn more about post-disaster building assessments on the BC Housing website. Look at building permit, re-inspections and permit history by your local building authority.

Managing mold and health risks

> **Tip:** Before you start any cleanup activities, call your insurance representative or company. Most insurers have a 24-hour claims service. Your policy may cover professional flood restoration. If so, use a qualified contractor for

> structural damage, significant floodwater contamination, hazardous materials, extensive mold or debris resulting from flood water.

Cleaning up after a flood can pose health risks. 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 grows in wet and damp conditions. It's less likely to grow if your home and furnishings are dry within 48 hours after a flood. This will help prevent mold, which can continue to damage your home long after.

Pregnant people, children, older adults, pets and those with asthma, allergies or other health problems should not be in or near the area where the mold is being cleaned up.

Identify all moldy items. Place and seal items in a plastic bag and dispose it. It's important to wash your hands thoroughly after mold cleanup, as well as change your clothes.

If you rent your home, speak to your landlord about any moisture or mold problems. It may be the responsibility of the owner or landlord to address the problem. If you own a condo unit or workspace, be sure to consult with the strata council before taking any action. Consider seeking professional assistance to identify the right corrective actions to be taken inside your home.

How to clean your home

> **Protect yourself:** If your insurer has advised you to clean, wear an N95 respirator, safety glasses, durable gloves, long sleeves, long pants and sturdy footwear. Ventilate the area when outdoor air quality allows. Keep children and pets away from cleanup areas.

Before you begin cleaning up, be sure to open all interior and exterior doors and windows, allowing air to flow freely through the space. Do not use fans if mold is present, as this can spread the mold to new areas.

Scrub all washable surfaces with a household bleach solution or unscented soap solution. These areas include windowsills, concrete surfaces, hard surfaces and tiles. Dry surfaces quickly.

Essential list of items for cleaning mold:

- Bucket
- Stiff bristle brush
- Cleaning clothes
- Goggles
- Protective rubber gloves
- Waterproof rubber boots
- Dish detergent
- Household bleach
- N-95 respirators, or ones that provide more protection, available at hardware stores. Be sure to read the directions for proper use.

Cleaning:

- A bleach solution is made up of 1-part bleach to 10-parts clean water.
- You can make a baking soda solution by adding a ¼ tablespoon of baking soda to a spray bottle of warm water.
- A soap solution can be made by combining unscented detergent and warm water.

Mold and porous materials. Mold cannot be properly cleaned from many porous materials. Instead, dispose of materials that cannot be dried within 48 hours.

Before staying in the home, test all smoke alarms and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms using the test button. Replace batteries where needed and replace any alarm that is damaged, expired or does not work properly. If an alarm has been exposed to significant water damage, check the manufacturer's instructions to determine whether it should be replaced.

Water damage and mold

- Tell your insurer and restoration contractor as soon as possible if you see or smell mold or find water damage.
- Dry the building and contents as quickly as possible to help prevent mold. PreparedBC recommends drying wet materials within 48 hours where possible.
- Remove standing water only when electrical, structural and contamination hazards have been addressed.
- Clean washable hard surfaces with cleaning solutions mentioned above, then dry them thoroughly.
- Remove wet carpet underlay. Dry salvageable carpet and materials as quickly as possible.
- Use fans and dehumidifiers only when power is safe and the equipment will not spread contamination.
- Use professional mold remediation for large areas, recurring growth or contamination involving sewage or hazardous materials.

Tip: Before staying in the home, test all smoke alarms and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms using the test button. Replace batteries where needed and replace any alarm that is damaged, expired or does not work properly. If an alarm has been exposed to significant water damage check the manufacturer's instructions to determine whether it should be replaced.

Yards, play areas and pools

- After clean-up, remove flood-borne material from yards.
- Re-sod or reseed grassy areas as needed.
- Keep children and pets away from debris, damaged fencing, standing water and floodwater residue.
- Wash outdoor toys and play equipment with mild detergent and clean water. Ensure any floodwater is cleared away.
- If there is floodwater or structural damage to play equipment, consider blocking access to the area until play equipment is repaired or replaced.
- Replace sandbox sand and loose playground surfacing if cleaning floodwater residue is not possible.

- Have pools inspected for structural and equipment damage. Use a pool service company to restore water quality. If the pool water was not circulating or was treated, harmful bacteria may have grown in the water.
- Drain, scrub clean and refill hot tubs before use, then balance and disinfect the water.

Fruit and vegetable gardens

- It may not be safe to eat fruits or vegetables that were growing above ground during the floodwater event, especially if covered with floodwater. Discard fruits and vegetables if visible impacts from floodwaters are present.
- In areas where floodwater directly impacted fruit-bearing trees or berry bushes (e.g. raspberries, apples, blueberries, soft fruit), as a precaution, consumption of fruit from gardens, forest or alpine areas to which floodwater impacted is not recommended.
- Regularly wet down gardens and lawns until the floodwater residues are diluted.
- Consider adding new, clean soil to gardens if you suspect or know the area was impacted.

FLOODWATER DEBRIS AND WASTE REMOVAL

General requirements

- Photograph and inventory materials before disposal. Keep receipts and any disposal records.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment and follow WorkSafeBC requirements.
- Do not disturb or transport structural floodwater debris until hazardous materials have been assessed.
- Flood impacted structures may contain asbestos, lead, treated wood and other contaminants. A hazardous materials survey may be required.
- The SLRD strongly suggests, as per WorkSafeBC guidance, working with an Abatement Company for flood debris and waste disposal.
- Floodwater debris may require special approval, handling and disposal.
- Household hazardous waste and flammable materials should not be disposed of as garbage.
- Disposal requirements, accepted materials, and temporary recovery programs may change by incident and facility.
- Insurance may cover removal and disposal costs; check with your insurer and keep all receipts.

> **Call before handling debris:** Floodwater debris may require pre-approval, special handling and disposal at a designated facility. Contact the SLRD before handling, loading and transporting any materials impacted by floodwater including but not limited to floodwater impacted building materials, asbestos-containing materials, vehicles, large appliances, concrete or animal carcasses. A hazardous materials survey may be required. Loads will not be processed without SLRD approval. Disposal and recycling guidelines are outlined on our Recycling and Waste Centres page.
>
> Contact: utilities@slrd.bc.ca or 604-894-6371 (toll free: 1-800-298-7753)

What to discard

- Remove and discard flooring that has been soaked by flood water.
- Remove all wet drywall, going at least 30 cm above the flood water level.
- Dispose of all wet items that do not dry quickly, including:
    - Insulation and drywall
    - Carpets
    - Particleboard furniture
    - Mattresses and box springs
    - Stuffed toys
    - Paper and cardboard products
    - Pillows and cushions
    - Furniture coverings
    - Perishable food, food or medicines packaged in cardboard or plastic

> **Mold:** Mold that comes back after cleaning is usually an indication that the source of moisture has not been removed. If this happens, always seek professional assistance. Painting or caulking over moldy surfaces like drywall does NOT kill mold and does not stop it from growing back. If the mold is underneath the paint, the drywall will need to be removed and replaced.

Waste disposal requires sorting debris into categories, and some items such as drywall needs special handling. Examples of sorting categories:

- Construction material (insulation, flooring, painted wood) and landfill waste (furniture)
- Large appliances
- Electronics
- Household hazardous waste
- Paint
- Batteries
- Potential asbestos-containing material
- Yard waste

> **Wet drywall:** Before disposing of wet drywall at any transfer station or facility, please contact the SLRD Environmental Services to confirm if and where it may be accepted: 604-894-6371 (toll free: 1-800-298-7753) or by email: utilities@slrd.bc.ca.

Drywall always requires special handling; facilities in Electoral Area C and D do not accept pre-1990 gypsum or potential asbestos-containing materials. Disposal facilities require proof and a signed declaration form:

- Building permit with date, or
- A piece of drywall with a date stamp.

> **Asbestos:** For homes built prior to 1990, or for drywall without a date stamp, please contact the SLRD Environmental Services: 604-894-6371 (toll free: 1-800-298-7753) or by email: utilities@slrd.bc.ca.

Recycling

The following materials are not accepted as waste at a landfill and are required to be cleaned, sorted and recycled. Visit SLRD Recycling, Composting & Waste to Landfill for a complete list of the SLRD waste and recycling disposal sites, including accepted materials.

- Large appliances
  - Fridge and freezer appliances. Empty and clean.
  - Stove, hot water tank, dishwasher, washer, dryer, portable air conditioner, etc.
- Used oil and filters
- Antifreeze and containers
- Electronics, cell phones, small appliances, and power tools
- Paint and aerosol
- Household hazardous waste
- Household and vehicle batteries
- Tires on and off rim
- Scrap and burned metal
- Smoke and CO alarms

Transfer Stations & Facilities

The SLRD website lists current hours, accepted materials and fees for Gold Bridge Transfer Station, Lillooet Landfill & Recycling Centre, Devine Transfer Station, and Pemberton Transfer Station. Whistler, Squamish and other municipal and/or First Nations facilities may have separate requirements.

More information: SLRD Wildfire and Disaster Debris Disposal | SLRD Asbestos management

REPAIRS, REBUILDING & BUILDING PERMITS

> **Contact your local building authority:** Local building authorities adhere to the British Columbia Building Code 2024 and may have specific bylaws.

Removing wet drywall, insulation, flooring and damaged content to dry out your home does not require a building permit. Repairing or rebuilding the building itself may require specific permits before starting work such as:

- Repairs to foundations, footings, beams, posts, or floor, wall or roof framing
- Replacing or relocating plumbing, hot water tanks or drainage
- Reinstalling or replacing a wood stove, fireplace insert or chimney
- Demolishing all or part of a building (a hazardous materials survey may be required first; see Floodwater Debris and Waste Removal section above)
- Raising, moving, adding to or rebuilding a building
- Placing a temporary dwelling, RV or trailer on the property to live in while you rebuild

Be aware of specific code compliance requirements

Examples might include:

- **Fire-rated walls**: Walls between a house and an attached garage, or between a home and a secondary suite, are fire separations. If drywall is removed from these walls, it must be replaced with fire-rated drywall to meet the BC Building Code.
- **Wood stoves and chimneys:** Do not use a wood stove, fireplace or chimney that was in floodwater until it has been inspected by a qualified (WETT-certified) inspector.
- **Rebuilding in a floodplain:** A building that is substantially rebuilt must meet the current BC Building Code. In floodplain areas, rebuilt or new construction may need to meet minimum floor elevations (flood construction levels) and setbacks. On properties at risk of flooding, debris flow or erosion, a report from a professional engineer may be required before a permit is issued. Speak with your local building and planning departments before designing a rebuild.

FOOD, MEDICATIONS AND HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS

> **Photograph food and other items before discarding them**, as your insurer may require an inventory. Follow current waste disposal instructions for your area. Some facilities may not accept spoiled food or other waste requiring special handling. Contact SLRD Environmental Services at utilities@slrd.bc.ca for guidance.

Guidance on refrigerators, freezers and spoiled food cleaning and disposal

After a prolonged power outage and before use, refrigerators and freezers should be visually inspected for external and internal damage. Do not use an appliance that appears damaged. Water can enter through appliance openings, damage internal components and create a safety or fire hazard. Consult a professional appliance technician to determine whether the appliance is still safe to use or needs to be replaced. If you have insurance, ask about coverage if the appliance was damaged.

Before restocking, confirm that the refrigerator can maintain 4°C and the freezer can maintain -18°C and that appropriate cleaning has been completed. If those temperatures cannot be maintained, then the appliance is considered to not be working properly and should either be repaired or replaced. In the event of significant spoiled food and/or mold that cannot be cleaned appropriately, we recommend replacing the appliance.

> **Fridges and freezers must be cleaned to be accepted for recycling:** Fridges and freezers are not accepted as waste at a landfill and are required to be cleaned, sorted and recycled. Bring your cleaned fridges and freezers to the Pemberton Transfer Station or the Whistler Transfer Station. Disposal and recycling guidelines are outlined on our Recycling and Waste Centres page.

Take the following steps to safely clean your refrigerator or freezer:

- Remove everything from the refrigerator or freezer.

- Use paper towels or rags to wipe up spills and leaks and dispose of them with the food waste.
- Wash out the appliance with warm, soapy water.
- Disinfect the refrigerator or freezer with a strong bleach solution (1 tsp household bleach per 4 cups water).
- Use latex or rubber gloves if you have sensitive skin that may be irritated by the bleach solution.
- To remove odors, wipe out the appliance with a mixture of water and baking soda, or keep a box of baking soda in the appliance. You also may want to air out the appliance for a few days before plugging it in and using it again. Secure doors in an open position to provide air flow and keep children away.
- Wait until the refrigerator has returned to 4°C or the freezer has returned to -18°C before restocking with food.

Should you replace your refrigerator or freezer?

- If your refrigerator or freezer does not work as it should (i.e. does not maintain temperatures), we recommend the appliance be repaired or replaced.
- If you cannot properly clean out spoiled food including mold, we recommend the appliance be replaced.
- If the appliance appears externally or internally damaged, do not try to use it. Consult a professional appliance technician to determine whether the appliance is still safe to use or needs to be repaired or replaced.
- If the appliance was exposed to floodwater which may have damaged internal components, do not try to use it. Consult a professional appliance technician to determine whether the appliance is still safe to use or needs to be repaired or replaced.
- If replacing your appliance, contact your insurance company about coverage as an eligible expense and your local government about its safe disposal.

Discard food when safety is uncertain:

- Discard refrigerated food if the power was out for four hours or more, the temperature rose above 4°C, or you cannot confirm time and temperature. When in doubt, throw it out.
- Discard frozen food that has thawed. Do not refreeze it. A full unopened freezer may keep food frozen for up to 48 hours, and a half-full freezer for up to 24 hours, but only if food remains frozen or contains ice crystals.
- Discard food exposed to floodwater.
- Discard food in paper, cardboard, plastic, cellophane, foam or other porous packaging exposed to floodwater.
- Discard cans that are bulging, rusted, leaking or badly dented.
- Discard produce exposed to water, including produce from a garden when floodwaters were present.

More information: Center for Disease Control – Keep Food Safe After a Disaster or Emergency

Medications and household products

Discard over-the-counter medications, cosmetics, toiletries and cleaning products that were exposed to floodwater. Cleaning products, solvents, flammables, paint, batteries and damaged fuel containers need to be disposed of

properly. Pharmaceuticals should be brought back to the pharmacy to be replaced and disposed of properly. Do not dispose of damaged hazardous products in regular garbage. Disposal and recycling guidelines are outlined on our Recycling and Waste Centres page. Contact: utilities@slrd.bc.ca or 604-894-6371 (toll-free: 1-800-298-7753).

UTILITIES, WATER AND WELLS, SEPTIC SYSTEMS

Water safety

B.C.'s regional health authorities administer the Drinking Water Protection Act and oversee drinking water systems. Within the SLRD, Interior Health serves Electoral Areas A and B, while Vancouver Coastal Health serves Electoral Areas C and D. Find water quality notifications on the Government of British Columbia website.

- If you receive water from a community water system, follow all instructions or notices issued by the water supplier or health authority.
- If you use a well, have the system inspected and the water tested after a flood. Water may be contaminated even if it looks, smells and tastes normal.

Private Wells

> **If floodwater reached your well, assume the water may be contaminated.** Floodwater can carry bacteria and other contaminants into a well or groundwater supply. Floodwater can enter a well or acquifer and affect water quality.

If your well was damaged or may have been exposed to flooding activities:

- **Assume the water is unsafe** until the system has been assessed and the water tested.
- Use bottled water for drinking, preparing food, making ice, brushing teeth, washing food or dishes, and giving water to pets.
- Do not use the water for showering, bathing or laundry unless the health authority confirms these uses are safe.
- Check the well and surrounding area for signs of damage or floodwater entry.
- A flooded well may need to be properly **flushed and disinfected**.
- Well water should be **tested following appropriate rehabilitation or disinfection** before relying on it as drinking water.
- If the well, pump, electrical system or wellhead has been damaged, have it assessed by a qualified professional.
- Contact your local health authority for advice about inspecting, testing and disinfecting the system.
- **Do not rely on boiling alone.** Boiling can kill many germs, but it does not remove chemical contaminants and may concentrate some chemicals.

Click on the links below for provincial information on flood management for water wells, including well disinfection and groundwater protection. Page 16 below also has information on utilities, water and septic systems.

More information: Flood management for water wells – Province of British Columbia | HealthLinkBC Clean after Flood

Electricity and generators

> **BC Hydro.** Contact BC Hydro at 1-888-769-3766 or *49376 from a mobile phone about outages, damaged infrastructure, or if you did not turn your power off prior to vacating your property.

- Remember that gas and electrical hazards may still exist long after flood waters recede.
- Contact a licensed contractor to inspect any safety hazards and ensure it is safe for you and your family.
    - Electrical appliances or systems damaged by flooding can be dangerous if they're re-energized and used without being properly inspected by a licensed contractor.
    - Visit technicalsafetybc.ca to find a contractor in your area.
    - Have damaged wiring, panels and appliances assessed before restoring power.
    - Use fuel-burning portable generators outdoors only if the flood water has entirely receded, and at least 6 metres (20 feet) from any home or building. Direct the exhaust away from doors, windows and vents. Never operate a generator in a garage, shed or other enclosed or partially enclosed space. Never connect a generator directly to a household circuit unless a qualified electrician has installed approved transfer equipment.
- Reconnecting your power after a flood:
    - Contact a qualified electrical contractor to inspect your electrical equipment and appliances. Visit technicalsafetybc.ca to find a qualified electrical contractor in your area.
    - The contractor will conduct a safety assessment of your property and apply for a permit from Technical Safety BC. In some cases, if emergency repairs are required, these may be conducted prior to a permit being issued. See Technical Safety BC's emergency repairs bulletin or call Technical Safety BC at 1-866-566-7233 for more details.
    - Your contractor will advise BC Hydro when it's safe for your power to be reconnected.
    - BC Hydro will arrange to have a crew reconnect your power within 24 hours. This is dependent on crews being able to safely access the area.

More information: BC Hydro – Know what to do in the event of a natural disaster | BC Hydro - Flood electrical safety information

Propane, natural gas and heating oil

> **Gas or Propane Smell.** If you smell gas or propane, leave immediately. Do not operate switches, lights, fans, phones or anything that could create a spark. Call the supplier or 9-1-1 from a safe location.

- Do not touch or move a damaged propane cylinder or tank. Keep your distance and contact the fire department, supplier or another qualified professional.

- Ask the supplier or a licensed technician to inspect propane, natural gas and heating oil systems before use.
- Contact Technical Safety BC if you need information about required permits or inspections.

Septic systems

- If your home was directly affected by the floodwaters, or if the floodwaters were close to your home, have a Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioner assess the system and recommend repairs. These individuals can be found by searching your geographic region at https://asttbc.org/applicants/rowps. Do not use the system unless you know it can safely handle waste. Systems with additional electrical components, such as dosing pumps or secondary treatment, should also be assessed to ensure safety.
- If you return home and there are signs of the system not working properly including drains flowing slowly and signs of wastewater breaking out on soil, a Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioner should be contacted immediately for assessment and repair.
- **Wood stoves and chimneys:** Do not use a wood stove, fireplace or chimney that was in floodwater until it has been inspected by a qualified (WETT-certified) inspector.

FARMS & AGRICULTURAL PROPERTIES

Flood recovery on farms can involve additional hazards, including **contaminated wells, livestock, damaged buildings and fencing, fuel and chemicals, manure, debris and damaged electrical systems**.

Check your property before resuming operations

Pay particular attention to:

- Wells and farm water supplies
- Barns and outbuildings
- Electrical and fuel systems
- Livestock areas and fencing
- Manure storage
- Chemical and pesticide storage
- Stored feed and crops
- Fields affected by debris or contamination
- Drainage systems, culverts and access roads

Livestock

Check animals for injuries and ensure they have access to safe water, feed and secure areas. Keep livestock away from contaminated water, hazardous debris and unsafe structures.

Document impacts and protect food safety

- Photograph damage to animals, pasture, crops, fencing, buildings, equipment, irrigation, water systems, roads and drainage.
- Keep records of livestock movements, feed, water, veterinary care, transportation, boarding, fencing and other emergency costs.
- Do not sell or consume food exposed to floodwater, unsafe temperatures or other contamination.
- Have private water systems inspected and tested where damage or contamination is possible.
- Ask a veterinarian about animal health concerns and AgriService BC about feed or farm food safety questions.

Land and pasture recovery

- Floodwater impacted areas may be vulnerable to erosion, future flooding, landslides and invasive plants.
- Seek site-specific advice before reseeding, grading, changing drainage or disturbing streamside areas.
- Use appropriate seed mixes, timing and erosion-control methods for the site.
- Inspect fences, gates, water systems and access routes before returning animals to an area.

Wells and water

If floodwater has reached a private well, **assume the water may be contaminated** until the well has been appropriately restored and the water is safe. B.C.'s agricultural guidance notes that floodwater can enter wells or aquifers and affect groundwater quality.

More information:

For agricultural information or support, contact AgriService BC at AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca or 1-888-221-7141.

AgriStability can help producers identify programs and access technical advice and agricultural resources. Call 1-888-343-2767 or email AgriStability@gov.bc.ca.

BC Cattlemen Livestock Water Quality Testing is a program that allows producers to test their water quality and help mitigate potential losses.

Provincial Flooding supports and resources for agriculture

Provincial What to do if your farm or ranch is affected by wildfire (also applies to flood affected farms or ranches)

MENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND CULTURAL WELL-BEING

Returning home and cleaning up after a flood can bring relief, anxiety, sadness, anger and uncertainty. Seeing damage or losing irreplaceable belongings can be deeply upsetting. These are common responses to a stressful event. Recovery often takes longer than expected.

- Create a support network of family, friends, neighbours, community members, Elders or professionals.

- Take breaks from cleanup and decision-making. Focus on immediate priorities rather than trying to solve everything at once.
- Keep routines where possible, including regular meals, sleep and time away from the affected property.
- Seek help if distress becomes overwhelming, does not improve or interferes with daily life.

> **Immediate crisis support:** Call or text 9-8-8 if you are thinking about suicide or feel overwhelmed or hopeless. Call 9-1-1 if there is an immediate danger.

Support lines

- B.C. Mental Health Support Line open 24 hours a day: 310-6789, no area code required
- KUU-US Indigenous Crisis Line: 1-800-588-8717
- Métis Crisis Line: 1-833-638-4722
- 211 British Columbia: call or text 2-1-1 for community, financial, housing and social-service referrals
- First Nations Health Authority: www.fnha.ca or call 1-855-550-5454 for eligible clients needing health services, medications, supplies or equipment.

More information: Canadian Mental Health Association: coping with disaster stress | HealthLink BC: mental health supports and resources

KEY CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

Use the incident-specific contact information issued for your community whenever it differs from this list. Phone numbers, program eligibility and facility requirements can change.

Service	Contact	Use this for
Immediate emergency	9-1-1	Police, fire or ambulance for an immediate threat to life or safety
SLRD Emergency Operations Centre **Public Safety Duty Officer**	604-384-7357	Current local recovery and incident information
SLRD main office	604-894-6371 or 1-800-298-7753	General enquiries and referral to SLRD services
SLRD Environmental Services	604-894-6371 or 1-800-298-7753 utilities@slrd.bc.ca	Floodwater debris, waste facilities and disposal requirements
HealthLink BC	8-1-1	Non-emergency health advice and service navigation

B.C. Evacuee Helpline	1-800-387-4258	Help with Emergency Support Services self-registration
BC Hydro	1-888-769-3766 *49376 mobile	Power outages, damaged infrastructure and service concerns
Technical Safety BC	1-866-566-7233	Electrical and gas safety, permits and inspections
Insurance Bureau of Canada	1-844-227-5422	Insurance information and help identifying an insurer
AgriService BC	1-888-221-7141 AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca	Agriculture, livestock and producer support
AgriStability	1-877-343-2767 AgriStability@gov.bc.ca	Eligible producer income-loss support
Disaster Financial Assistance	1-888-257-4777 DFA.Private@gov.bc.ca	Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) for qualifying event
Suicide Crisis Helpline	Call or text 9-8-8	Immediate, confidential crisis support
KUU-US Indigenous Crisis Line	1-800-588-8717	24-hour culturally safe crisis support
211 British Columbia	Call or text 2-1-1	Community, housing, financial and social-service referrals

Health authorities

The SLRD spans two regional health authorities. Follow the health authority directions issued for your community. Electoral Areas A and B are served by Interior Health. Electoral Areas C and D are served by Vancouver Coastal Health. First Nations communities may also receive support from the First Nations Health Authority.

- Interior Health: health, food, water and environmental health information
- Vancouver Coastal Health: health and environmental health information
- First Nations Health Authority Health emergency management preparedness and response guide: health benefits, mental health and culturally safe supports

Flood recovery guidance

Flood recovery:

- Recovering after a flood – PreparedBC (https://www.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/preparedbc/know-your-hazards/floods/after-flood)
- HealthLink BC (https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/clean-after-flood)

Agricultural producers:

- Ministry of Agriculture and Food: After an Emergency: Re-entry & Recovery Guidance for Agricultural Operations (https://www.slrd.bc.ca/media/file/re-entry-recovery-guidance-agricultural-operations)
- Government of BC Flooding Supports and Resources for Agriculture (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/business-market-development/emergency-management/freshet-and-flood/flooding-emergency-resources)
- SLRD Agricultural Emergency Preparedness (https://www.slrd.bc.ca/agriculturepreparedness)
- Provincial Health and wellness in the agriculture industry (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/business-market-development/emergency-management/health-wellness-preparedness)
- BC Stay safe and healthy in an emergency (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/preparedbc/make-your-plan/health-in-emergency)

Private wells:

- Flood management for water wells – Province of British Columbia (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/agricultural-land-and-environment/water/flooding/flood-management-for-water-wells)

Insurance:

- Insurance and emergency preparedness – PreparedBC (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/preparedbc/make-your-plan/insurance)
- Insurance Bureau of Canada Flooding (https://www.ibc.ca/stay-protected/severe-weather-centre/flooding-and-insurance)

General flood preparedness & recovery:

- Floods – Get Prepared, Government of Canada (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/hazards-emergencies/floods/how-prepare.html)
- Prepared BC: Flood Preparedness Guide (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/preparedbc/preparedbc-guides/preparedbc_flood_preparedness_guide_fillable.pdf)

Coping with disaster stress:

- Canadian Mental Health Association Coping with disaster stress (https://bc.cmha.ca/documents/coping-with-disaster-stress/)
- BC Disaster Stress (https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/find-care/find-health-services/program/bc-disaster-stress)