

# Linn Area Storms and Flooding

SPRING 2009

## Relief and Recovery Assistance Guide

A joint project of



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Purpose .....	4
II. Getting Started.....	4
Insurance.....	4
FEMA .....	4
Jumpstart.....	5
USDA Rural Development .....	6
III. Local Assistance .....	6
Community Recovery Center .....	6
Unmet Needs Grant Program.....	7
Information and Referral.....	7
Project Recovery Iowa.....	7
Free Counseling .....	8
Crisis Center.....	8
Spiritual Care .....	8
Legal Services.....	8
Flood Financial Management Counseling .....	9
Consumer Credit Counseling Service.....	9
Mortgage Assistance.....	10
Utility Assistance .....	10
Assistance for Children With Asthma .....	11
IV. Statewide Disaster Assistance .....	11
Employment Assistance.....	11
Unemployment.....	11
Document Replacement.....	11
State of Iowa Driver’s License or ID.....	12
New or Replacement Social Security Card.....	12
Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) .....	12
Change of Address .....	12
IRS Information .....	12
Assistance for Veterans.....	12
Assistance for Cancer Patients.....	13
Assistance for First-Time Homeowners .....	13
Assistance for College Students.....	13
Complaints .....	13
V. Clean-Up .....	14
Preserving Wet Documents .....	14
Clean-Up Tips.....	14
Mold Remediation and Clean-Up.....	15
Generator Safety .....	16
Space Heater Safety .....	16
Garden Produce Safety .....	17
VI. Repairs and Rebuilding.....	18
Licensed Home Improvement Contractors .....	18
Building Permits .....	18

Contacting Utility Companies.....	18
VII. Information About Donations and Volunteering.....	18
Organizations Accepting Monetary Donations.....	18
Volunteering.....	19
VIII. Important Phone Numbers.....	19
IX. Linn County Resources .....	20

## **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Assistance Guide is to connect residents affected by the Spring and Summer 2008 storms and flooding in Linn County and surrounding areas with disaster assistance. The Guide lists information on many programs and agencies. Updates and verification are ongoing.

The Guide is arranged in sections based on needs and the types of services provided. Within each section there is information showing available resources. Phone numbers and specific information regarding service eligibility, hours, etc. may also be outlined.

You are welcome to call 2-1-1, (319) 739-4211, or (866) 469-2211, 24 hours a day, seven days a week for help in finding available disaster assistance services. Language translation and TTY services are offered to any caller. 2-1-1 will help identify the best local resources to fit your individual needs after a disaster or for life's everyday situations.

Emotional support for people affected by disasters or other overwhelming events is available by calling the Abbe Center for Community Mental Health at (319) 398-3562, where experienced crisis counselors can be reached. You may also contact Foundation 2 Crisis Center at 319-362-2174.

## **II. GETTING STARTED**

### **Insurance Claims**

If you have flood insurance, call the agent who handles your flood insurance to file a claim or the National Flood Insurance Program 1-800-638-6620 to confirm your current flood insurance and to find out where to submit your claim. To make filing your claim easier, take photos of any damage in the house and save damaged personal property. An insurance adjuster will need to see what is damaged in order to process your claim. Because you will be filing after the 60-day deadline, you may not receive a reimbursement. However, you should file your claim anyway.

### **FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency**

There are two primary Federal programs that offer disaster assistance:

- **FEMA's Individuals and Households Program** provides money and direct services to those affected by a major disaster. Requirements must be met to qualify for help from this program.
- **The U.S. Small Business Administration** provides low-interest loans for damage to property owned by homeowners, renters, businesses, and private non-profit organizations that are not fully covered by insurance.

The deadline to apply with FEMA was October 31, 2008. If you had extenuating circumstances that prevented you from registering, you may call FEMA at (800) 621-3362; TTY users can call (800) 462-7585.

**You may appeal any decision.** Appeals may relate to your eligibility, the amount or type of help provided to you, late applications, requests to return money, or questions regarding continuing help.

Consider contacting Legal Aid of Iowa when filing an appeal. Their number is (319) 364-6108 or (800) 532-1275.

1. Explain in writing why you think the decision about the amount or type of assistance you received is not correct.
  - When submitting your letter, please include your full name, date and place of birth, and address. In addition, your letter must be either notarized, include a copy of a state issued identification card, or include the following statement, “I hereby declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.” You must sign the letter.
  - If someone other than you or the co-applicant is writing the letter, then a statement must be included saying that that person may act for you.
2. Include the FEMA application number and disaster number (shown at the top of your decision letter) in your letter of appeal.
3. Mail your appeal letter to: FEMA, National Processing Service Center, P.O. Box 10055, Hyattsville, MD 20782-7055
4. You can fax your appeal letter to: (800) 827-8112, Attention: FEMA

**IMPORTANT:** To be considered by IHP, your appeal letter must be postmarked within 60 days of the date of the individual or household decision letter’s date. Remember to date your letters.

Requesting your file:

If you need information about your case, you or the co-applicant on your application may request a copy of the information in your file by writing to: FEMA – Records Management, National Processing Service Center, P.O. Box 10055, Hyattsville, MD 20782-7055

For more information, go to

<https://www.disasteraid.fema.gov/IAC/displayPage.do?forward=home&>

**If you suspect someone is filing false damage claims,** please report it to the FEMA Fraud Hotline at (866) 720-5721. Help FEMA make sure that disaster aid goes only to those who deserve it. It is a violation of federal law to file a false claim.

If you have general questions regarding FEMA, call the FEMA Housing Hotline at (866) 274-4392.

### **Jumpstart**

Jumpstart awards funds to qualified homeowners and small businesses.

The Jumpstart Iowa Homeowner Assistance Program is administered through the Iowa Finance Authority. This program will help homeowners make a down payment on a new house, repair their current home, or maintain their mortgages while waiting for a potential buyout from FEMA. The maximum award is a \$50,000 loan, plus an additional \$10,000 for energy-efficient

appliances, all of which will be forgiven if the homeowner stays in the house for 10 years. For more information, call Jumpstart at (319) 286-5850.

Administered through the Iowa Department of Economic Development, the Jumpstart Iowa Small Business Assistance Program will provide forgivable loans to small businesses. The funds will help pay down their SBA loans from the federal government and will provide funding to promote sustainable rebuilding efforts. The loans will be forgiven if the business opens its doors within 12 months of receiving funds.

[Cedar Rapids businesses can apply online here.](#)

### **USDA Rural Development**

Loans may be available from the USDA for flood victims who live in areas declared as rural and who are ineligible for an SBA loan. When applying for loans, you may be asked to show:

- An itemized list of losses and estimated cost of replacement or repair
- Copies of your federal tax returns for the last three years
- Copies of your deed, mortgage, or lease
- Estimates of new flood insurance premiums
- Copies of previous insurance policies or settlements
- **For Personal Loss:** Proof of monthly income (paycheck stubs, bank statements); driver's license and/or social security number
- **For Business or Farm Loss:** Brief history of the business or farm; personal and business financial statements; loan repayment schedule; list of bills owed; Farm Service Agency Information on farm crop base and assigned yields

You can submit a form online at <http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov/>. You will have to register online and create a USDA account before you can fill out and submit an application form. You may also apply at your local USDA Service Center at (563) 886-6006. Ask for Jan Finn-Takes, Dan Speed, or Glenda Schroeder.

### **III. LOCAL ASSISTANCE**

#### **Community Recovery Center**

The Community Recovery Center at 220 6<sup>th</sup> Street NW in Cedar Rapids is home to the Case Advocacy Program, Construction Manager, Volunteer Reception Center, Matthew 25 Tool Lending Library, and Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO).

Case Advocates work with survivors of the flood to meet their unmet needs. Advocates help individuals navigate programs, access community resources, and empower themselves. Individuals needing ongoing assistance should start by talking to a case advocate. Call (319) 261-0987 or stop by to talk to a case advocate.

The Construction Manager works with area volunteers to help rebuild homes affected by the flood. Individuals needing assistance must first talk to a case advocate by calling (319) 261-0987.

The Volunteer Center, which is staffed by AmeriCorps VISTA, coordinates volunteers, to muck,

gut, and rebuild homes for homeowners. To access their services, individuals must first talk to a case advocate by calling (319) 261-0987. To volunteer, call (319) 540-4810.

The Matthew 25 Tool Lending Library is open Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.; and Saturday 9 to 11 a.m. You may borrow tools of all kinds and sizes. Call (319) 491-4466 for more information.

RIO was established by Governor Chet Culver to coordinate the statewide recovery effort after the floods, tornadoes and severe weather of 2008. The Rebuild Iowa Office works with all local, state and federal recovery partners to encourage cooperation and communication toward a holistic recovery approach and to ensure a successful recovery for Iowa. Call (319) 261-0987 to talk to the local RIO office.

### **Unmet Needs Grant Program**

The State of Iowa Unmet Needs Grant Program has been announced by the Rebuild Iowa Office and the Department of Human Services. The purpose of the program is to provide additional relief to flood survivors. The program will be administered through the Linn Area Long Term Recovery Coalition and will include an application process to determine eligibility. Households (not individuals within the household) may receive up to \$2500 in assistance in specific categories of need including personal property, home repair, food assistance, mental health services, childcare, and temporary housing.

To be eligible, each household must meet all of the following criteria: be registered with FEMA and show proof of the FEMA number; be citizens of the USA; have a household income at or below 300% percent of the federal poverty level; and show they lived in Linn County between May 24 and August 14, 2008. All adults 18+ in each household must provide a photo ID. The head of household must provide a written narrative of how the requested items and assistance are directly related to the disaster as well as sign a duplication of benefits request.

Applications are being taken at the Community Recovery Center at 220 6<sup>th</sup> Street NW. Calls for applications are not accepted. After the application is completed, expect up to two weeks to obtain vouchers for items requested.

### **Information and Referral**

Call 2-1-1 or (319) 739-4211 to learn about local community resources. Each county has specific services set up for individuals and families affected by disasters. An experienced call specialist can help you find the best service to meet your needs.

### **Project Recovery Iowa**

Project Recovery has outreach workers that can follow up with individuals or businesses either by phone or in person. Project Recovery provides support and connects people to pre-existing community resources.

Project Recovery Iowa is a crisis counseling program administered by the Iowa Department of

Human Services. The Project Recovery Iowa Crisis Counseling Program is a strength-based, prevention and outreach-oriented approach to helping disaster survivors access and identify personal and community resources that will aid the recovery process. It consists primarily of supportive, educational, face-to-face interventions with individuals and communities in their natural environments.

The Iowa Concern Hotline (800) 447-1985 is the entry point for Project Recovery Iowa services. Confidential counseling is available 24/7. Hotline counselors can provide immediate assistance and will make referrals to outreach staff if needed.

### **Free Counseling**

Abbe Center for Community Mental Health offers free counseling for flood affected people, as well as a wide range of other mental health services. Contact Abbe at (319) 398-3562 and ask to speak to someone in the intake office.

### **Crisis Center**

Individuals may also contact Foundation 2 Crisis Center at (319) 362-2174.

Foundation 2 Crisis Center provides trained, compassionate telephone counselors 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You can reach a crisis counselor by calling (319) 362-2174 in the Cedar Rapids local calling area.

### **Spiritual Care Resources**

After the flood, an interfaith group came together to offer care, hope, and acceptance to flood survivors. These representatives formed the Faithful Response arm of the Linn Area Long Term Recovery Coalition and meet regularly to assess and meet the needs of the community – both material and spiritual. For more information call Larry McGuire at (319) 533-1053, Tom Capo at (319) 362-9827 or Dr. Doug Miller at (319) 929-2600.

### **Legal Services**

#### **Iowa Legal Aid**

Iowa Legal Aid can assist with the following disaster-related issues:

- Avoiding ripoffs
- Bankruptcy
- Mortgage
- Foreclosure prevention
- Education/schools
- FEMA programs
- Food assistance (Food Stamps)
- Housing issues
- Immigration
- Other family issues

- Domestic violence
- Proving your identity
- Social Security
- Unemployment compensation

Iowa Legal Aid can assist with civil legal services for low-income people including, housing, family, consumer, public entitlements, education, employment, and health care access. The local office is located at 210 2<sup>nd</sup> Street S.E. Suite 302, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403. The telephone numbers are: (319) 364-6108 or (800) 532-1275.

### **Disaster Legal Services Hotline**

The Iowa State Bar Association, in coordination with FEMA/American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division and the Polk County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project, has established a free Disaster Legal Services Hotline to provide legal services to the residents of Iowa who were affected by the recent severe weather events.

Volunteer attorneys from around Iowa are scheduled to respond to calls made to the hotline. If a caller should need further legal assistance, they will be matched with a volunteer attorney who can assist them.

The Disaster Legal Services Hotline telephone number is (877) 775-8882.

### **Flood Financial Management Counseling**

Since the flood, many families are having trouble making financial ends meet. The family budget just doesn't look the same as before the flood. Iowa State University, Linn County Extension, with funding help from the City of Cedar Rapids, is offering financial counseling for residents of Linn County who have been affected by the flood.

Families can receive **FREE** assistance to:

- Reclaim documents lost in the flood
- Build a new after flood family budget
- Review housing options
- Link to other community supports

This is a **completely confidential** process; clients share as much or as little of their financial information as they feel comfortable with. Our goal is to support families as they sort through the many decisions they face. If you would like to make an appointment or want more information about this service please contact Christina Barger, Flood Financial Management Counselor (319) 377-9839 or [cbarger@iastate.edu](mailto:cbarger@iastate.edu).

### **Consumer Credit Counseling Service**

If you need assistance in working with budgeting, setting priorities, or working with creditors, insurance companies, mortgage companies, or FEMA, contact Horizons Consumer Credit Counseling Services, part of Horizons, A Family Service Alliance.

Budget counseling helps you set goals through developing realistic spending plans. Debt management programs assist you in establishing practical repayment plans that are administered through the agency. Financial literacy programs are offered through a variety of educational seminars and workshops designed to increase clients understanding of financial responsibilities.

Contact Horizons at (319) 398-3576, (800) 826-3574 or [www.horizonsfamily.org](http://www.horizonsfamily.org)

### **Mortgage Assistance**

The Iowa Mortgage Hotline refers households to a third party for assistance in mediating solutions with the bank. Call (877) 622-4866 for more information.

Also, The Federal Housing Administration offers a program that provides mortgage insurance so that flood survivors can finance the purchase or reconstruction of a single-family house. The Section 203(h) program allows the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to insure mortgages made by qualified lenders to victims of a major disaster who have lost their homes and are in the process of rebuilding or buying another home. For more information, ask a local lender if they are approved to administer Section 203 (h).

### **Utility Assistance**

**Rebates:** To help make energy-efficient purchases more affordable for flood-affected customers, Interstate Power and Light Company (IPL), an Alliant Energy company, has increased the cash rebates by 50 percent on all building materials, measures and appliances, except compact fluorescent light bulbs. For example, the refrigerator cash rebate for non-affected customers will remain at its original level of \$50. The refrigerator rebate for flood-affected customers will rise to \$75.

The increased energy-efficiency cash rebates for flood-affected homeowners and businesses became effective June 8, 2008, and will extend until June 30, 2009.

These rebates apply to the following energy-efficient equipment: Air-Source Heat Pumps; Energy Star Ceiling Fans; Central Air Conditioning; Energy Star Clock-Programmable Thermostats; Ground-Source Heat Pumps; Energy Star Clothes Washers; Caulking and Weather Stripping; Attic Insulation; In-Wall Insulation; Foundation Insulation; Energy Star Lighting Fixtures; Natural Gas Boilers; Natural Gas Furnaces; Energy Star Refrigerators and Freezers; and Energy Star Replacement Windows/Sashes and Doors.

All rebate forms can be accessed online at [www.alliantenergy.com/forms](http://www.alliantenergy.com/forms). In addition, you can call (800) 723-7635 from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday to have forms mailed to you. You must fill out and return the rebate form(s) and sales receipt(s) or itemized invoice(s) within 30 days of installation/completion for your selected product or service.

**Energy Flood Relief Program:** Alliant Energy is working to get additional funding to offer more customers full replacement value for clothes washers, clothes dryers, refrigerators, and

freezers. The income guidelines for this program follow the federal poverty limits of up to 250%. To receive an application, call 2-1-1 or (319) 739-4211. If money becomes available, your application will be on file.

### **Assistance for Children With Asthma**

Linn County Public Health is sponsoring a free in-home asthma education program to help children with asthma. The Children's Home Asthma Management Program, or CHAMP, is available for families with children older than 5 with asthma. The program includes an indoor air quality inspection of the home that will help identify potential asthma triggers, and provides follow-up visits that focus on asthma education. Families in Linn and surrounding counties are eligible. The CHAMP program is funded by a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency and by project partners. For more information about the CHAMP asthma project, call (319) 892-6022.

## **IV. STATEWIDE DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

### **Employment Assistance**

The Emergency Public Jobs program (EPJ), works through a \$17.1 million federal grant designed to put Iowans who have lost their jobs due to the tornadoes or floods back to work. These temporary jobs assist in disaster clean-up and restoration efforts. EPJ employees work in such varied activities as mucking out flooded buildings, rehabbing nature trails and parks and providing office assistance to recovery organizations. Individuals eligible for employment with the EPJ program are:

- Workers who have been temporarily or permanently dislocated as a result of the disaster
- Eligible dislocated workers who are unemployed as defined by the Workforce Investment Act
- Individuals who are long-term unemployed

Priority to participate in the grant is given to those workers who have experienced temporary or permanent job loss as a result of the disaster. Individuals may work up to 1,040 hours (about six months). Wages will be paid at the prevailing wage of the worksite. Tools and training are provided by the program. For more information, contact Iowa Workforce Development staff members Mike Rose at (319) 398-5105, or Gary Vogt at (319) 398-5070.

### **Unemployment**

The last day to file for Unemployment Insurance due to your employer closing because of the floods was November 29, 2008. For questions, contact Iowa Workforce Development at 800 7<sup>th</sup> Street SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403 or (319) 365-9474.

### **Document Replacement**

To obtain information for the replacement of lost marriage, birth, and death certificates call the Recorder's Office at (319) 892-5420. Their office is located on the upper floor of at the Westdale Mall near JC Penney.

Also, Christina Barger, Flood Financial Management Counselor with ISU Linn County Extension, may provide free assistance to families to reclaim documents lost in the flood. Contact her at (319) 377-9839.

### **State of Iowa Driver's License or ID**

Those who wish to obtain a State of Iowa Driver's License or ID will be required to meet the State of Iowa documentation requirements. The Department of Transportation is located at 152 Collins Road NE in the K-Mart Plaza East. The telephone number is (319) 377-6461.

### **New or Replacement Social Security Card**

Anyone receiving Social Security payments or needing replacement cards may contact the Social Security office at (319) 393-0045. The office is located at 3165 Williams Blvd. SW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404.

### **Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)**

Those who already receive SSI and SSDI should contact the Social Security Administration directly at (319) 393-0045 to learn how checks may be reissued, cards replaced, or to report a change in address.

### **Change of Address**

A change of address form is available online at [www.usps.gov](http://www.usps.gov) or at any U.S. Postal Service location. Please be sure when you find permanent housing that your address is current and that FEMA has also been notified if you are expecting assistance.

### **IRS Information**

For information on tax relief, contact the IRS Disaster Assistance Hotline at (866) 562-5227.

### **Assistance for Veterans**

Linn County Veterans Affairs (319) 892-5160  
Iowa Department of Veterans (800) 838-4692  
U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, (800) 827-1000, TTY (800) 829-4833 or [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)  
Iowa City Veterans Medical Center, (800) 637-0128  
Iowa Veterans Trust Fund (319) 892-5160

The Iowa Veterans Trust Fund offers help for veterans with vehicle repair assistance, housing repair assistance, and temporary housing assistance in emergency situations. To apply for the Iowa Veterans Trust Fund, go to the Linn County Veterans Affairs office. Bring in your military discharge and proof you have applied for FEMA and SBA. They will help you complete the Iowa Trust Fund Application. Their office is located at Westdale Mall.

### **Assistance for Cancer Patients**

For cancer patients currently receiving treatment and living in Iowa counties that have been designated a federal disaster area, assistance of up to \$1,000 may be available to ease the burden of transportation, lodging, or other unexpected expenses due to the storms and flooding.

Call the American Cancer Society at (800) 227-2345 for more information.

### **Assistance for Individuals to Replace Assistive Technology**

This is a grant for individuals who are disabled, low income, and unable to replace basic assistive technology lost in the flood. Assistive technology includes specialized computers or software, wheelchairs, communication devices, home modifications, vehicle modifications and other devices. To apply, call (888) 222-8943 or visit [www.iowaable.org](http://www.iowaable.org).

### **Assistance for First-Time Homebuyers**

The First Time Homeowners Grant is a program to assist qualified first-time homebuyers with down payment and closing cost assistance up to \$6,000. Applications are available at the Cedar Rapids Housing Office, 1211 6<sup>th</sup> St. SW, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday or are available online at [www.cedar-rapids.org/housing/First\\_time\\_homebuyer.asp](http://www.cedar-rapids.org/housing/First_time_homebuyer.asp).

Applications are being accepted on a first-come first-served basis at the Cedar Rapids Housing Services Office.

### **Assistance for College Students**

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission created a new one-time grant program to help students affected by the 2008 storms and flooding.

The student must file a 2008-2009 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov), if he or she has not already done so. Then the student must complete and submit the Disaster Relief Grant application at [www.iowacollegeaid.gov/commissioncentral/disasterreliefgrant.html](http://www.iowacollegeaid.gov/commissioncentral/disasterreliefgrant.html).

For questions or additional information, contact the Iowa College Aid Information Service Center at (877) 272-4456.

### **Complaints**

The Better Business Bureau at (800) 222-1600 takes complaints about, among other things, misleading advertising, improper selling practices, and non-delivery of goods or services, complaints about nonprofit/charitable organizations and complaints about the misuse of personally identifiable information.

State of Iowa Department of Insurance at (877) 955-1212 takes complaints against insurance agencies or agents. The complaint form can also be obtained at [www.iid.state.ia.us](http://www.iid.state.ia.us)

The Attorney General's Office takes complaints about consumer fraud. Their number is (888) 777-4590 or (515) 281-5926.

## **V. CLEAN-UP**

The following information was gathered from various sources for your information only. Please call your physician if you become ill at any time during clean-up.

### **Preserving Wet Documents**

To preserve family treasures, review this informational link at the National Archives [www.archives.gov/preservation/disaster-response/guidelines.html](http://www.archives.gov/preservation/disaster-response/guidelines.html).

### **Clean-Up Tips**

Even though the floodwater has receded, many dangers remain. Most of these dangers are not visible. Skin exposure to flood water or residue can contain toxins and other hazardous contaminants that can cause rashes and other allergic reactions. Breathing in the dust and mold spores from flood residue can irritate the respiratory system, especially in people who have asthma or other respiratory problems.

Remember the following basic safety guidelines when cleaning up:

Wear boots, masks (N95 or better), goggles, long sleeves, and long pants when working in flood-affected areas. Breathing in dust and mold spores from flood residue can irritate the respiratory system and trigger asthma attacks.

When cleaning any non-absorbent surfaces, use a mixture of bleach and water at a ratio of 1 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water. Warning: Never mix bleach and ammonia.

Throw away all toys and other materials that have been exposed to the flood and cannot be thoroughly disinfected.

Plastics and any other absorbent materials cannot be effectively disinfected, even using the bleach mixture. These items must be thrown away.

Do not allow children into flood-contaminated areas because they are particularly vulnerable to the transmission of disease.

Wash hands thoroughly after handling any flood related materials, even if gloves have been worn, and especially before eating or drinking.

Make sure that you and your family have been vaccinated for tetanus. Verify that you and everyone in your household who has been exposed to flood water has had a tetanus vaccine in the past 10 years, or see your healthcare provider to arrange for a tetanus vaccination.

If a generator is being used to power a pump or other equipment, do not keep the generator

inside the building. When a generator is running, keep it far away from any building. Keep windows, doors, and vents open to prevent carbon monoxide build up. Carbon Monoxide poisoning can kill people in a matter of minutes.

Clothes that were in the floodwaters need to be thrown away. Clothes that were in the home but were not touched by flood water but smell musty must be thrown away. Clothes that people are working in can be washed, preferably in hot water.

### **Mold Remediation and Clean-up**

(From the Minnesota Department of Health)

After a flood, many people become convinced – often with the help of an aggressive salesperson – that *testing* is the best way to find out if you have a mold problem. That isn't necessarily true. The most practical and reliable tools for detecting a mold problem are your eyes and nose. If you see something that looks like mold, or you detect an earthy or musty smell, you should assume a mold problem exists. The presence of moisture or worsening allergy-like symptoms can also tip you off to a mold problem.

#### **Clean-up and removal of mold**

**Identify and remove any sources of moisture.** This is the most important – and the most basic – thing you need to do. Mold can't grow without moisture. And don't forget to look for sources of moisture that aren't related to the flood.

**Begin drying any and all materials that got wet.** Do this as soon as possible. After the floodwaters have receded, water-soaked building materials and household items can be a significant ongoing source of moisture, promoting the growth of mold. They should be rapidly dried or removed from the building if possible. For severe moisture problems, use fans and dehumidifiers, and move wet items away from walls and off floors. However, to avoid spreading mold spores, do not operate fans if visible mold is already present.

**Remove and dispose of mold-contaminated materials.** Look for mold on porous items that may have absorbed moisture– including sheet rock, insulation, plaster, carpet/carpet pad, ceiling tiles, wood (other than solid wood), and paper products. If you see evidence of mold, these items should be removed, bagged and thrown out. Non-porous materials can be saved if they are properly cleaned and dried and then kept that way.

**Clean non-porous or semi-porous items.** Mold can grow on materials like hard plastic, concrete, glass, or metal – but it can usually be removed with careful cleaning. Solid wood items can also be salvaged through cleaning, if they are structurally sound. Bear in mind that mold spores and particles can cause health problems even if they're dead. For that reason, when you clean an item, the objective is to capture and remove the mold contamination.

For heavily contaminated items, begin by using a HEPA vacuum (not a conventional household vacuum or shop vac) to remove as much contamination as possible. If you can't get a HEPA

vacuum, carefully damp wipe the item, to remove as much surface contamination as possible. Rinse wipes often with clean water. Dispose of your wipes and rinse water frequently and properly – they'll be contaminated with mold.

After HEPA-vacuuuming or damp wiping, thoroughly scrub all contaminated surfaces. Use a stiff brush, hot water, and a non-ammonia soap/detergent or commercial cleaner.

Collect excess cleaner/cleaning water with a wet/dry vacuum, mop or sponge.

Rinse the surface or item – and the clean-up area -- with clean water. Collect the excess rinse water, and dry everything as quickly as possible.

**Disinfect surfaces (optional).** After removing all visible mold and other dirt or soiling from contaminated surfaces, a disinfectant may be used to kill some of the mold that may still be present. Disinfection is not a substitute for cleaning and removal of mold. However, it's essential for items that have been in contact with sewage. If you disinfect, follow these guidelines:

- Mix 1/4 to 1/2 cup bleach per gallon of water and apply to surfaces where mold growth was visible before cleaning. Apply with a spray bottle, garden sprayer, sponge, or some other suitable method.

Collect any run-off of the bleach solution with a wet/dry vacuum, sponge or mop. Do not rinse or wipe the bleach solution from the items or surfaces being treated — allow it to dry on the surface.

### **Generator Safety**

According to the Linn County's Department of Public Health, flood-affected families and business owners need to maintain safe generator operations. Generators should not be placed near an entrance, window, or air intake system of a home or business. Carbon monoxide exhaust from the generator will be drawn into the building if placed too close to these entry points and workers inside can be quickly overcome with exhaust fumes. Symptoms include: lightheadedness, nausea, and disorientation. Anyone suffering these symptoms should see an emergency room physician immediately.

### **Space Heater Safety**

From the Jacksonville, FL, Fire and Rescue website:

If used properly, space heaters can provide temporary relief during a cold spell, but they should not be considered a permanent solution to a home heating problem. They're too dangerous. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that every year space heaters are associated with more than 25,000 residential fires and 300 fatalities.

To minimize the risk of fire while using a space heater, read and follow the manufacturer's operating instructions. Also, be sure to:

- Buy a space heater that has been certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory.
- Keep all furniture and combustible items at least three feet away from any heating device.
- Never use space heaters to dry clothing, towels, or other combustibles.
- Never refill a fuel-burning space heater while it's on or inside your house.
- Space heaters should not be left on while you are asleep or leave the room.
- When not in use, space heaters should be unplugged.
- Do not connect a space heater to an outlet with an extension cord, and never overload the circuit.
- Never use a space heater with a damaged or frayed cord, and never cover the cord with carpeting or furniture.
- Be sure your space heater is in good working condition and that the heating element is protected by a metal guard.
- Keep young children away from space heaters.
- Avoid using electric space heaters in a bathroom, and never touch an electric heater when you are wet.
- Make sure that your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working before using a space heater.
- Check the cord on an electric space heater to determine if it is very warm or hot. If so, unplug it immediately and try another outlet. If it continues to be hot, contact an electrician.
- Keep the area you are heating well ventilated.

### **Garden Produce Safety**

If floodwaters have covered a garden, some produce will be unsafe to eat.

The safety of unharvested fruits and vegetables depends on:

- Kind of produce
- Maturity of produce at the time of flooding
- Severity of flooding (depth of water and silt)
- Duration of flooding
- Likelihood of contamination from sewage, other bacterial contaminants or industrial pollutants. (Raw sewage contains bacteria that can cause illness if contaminated fruits or vegetables are eaten.)

Gardeners should keep in mind that although pathogens will eventually die out, they can remain present in the soil for several months. If the homeowner knows the area was contaminated with sewage, it is recommended that no produce be used from the garden for at least 90 days.

Remember, as always, fruits and vegetables should be thoroughly washed prior to consumption. Contact ISU Linn County Extension at (319) 377-9839 with questions.

## **VI. REPAIRS AND REBUILDING**

### **Licensed Home Improvement Contractors**

The City of Cedar Rapids has established a Contractor Certification Program for contractors seeking to provide clean-up, repair, or construction services within the flood-affected area. Each company and all employees working within the affected area must be registered and issued a photo identification badge. This certification process is intended to provide residents with a means of distinguishing between legitimate and fraudulent contractors. If you are a contractor needing certification, call (319) 286-5831. To view the list, go to [www.corridorrecovery.org](http://www.corridorrecovery.org).

### **Building Permits**

The City of Cedar Rapids has temporarily changed the building permit process to allow residents to use volunteer labor from non-profit charitable organizations for help in rebuilding their flood-damaged homes.

For information on mechanical, electrical, and plumbing building permits, visit the Code Enforcement Division's temporary location at Westdale Mall or call (319) 286-5831.

### **Contacting Utility Companies**

Iowa law requires you to call 811 prior to outdoor construction or digging. Contractors and property owners – whoever is excavating – must call Alliant Energy at (800) 255-4268 and take the following steps:

- Wait for the site to be marked with paint, flags or stakes. Yellow indicates the presence of underground natural gas lines.
- Respect the marks and dig with care.
- Hand dig within two feet of buried piping and facilities.

To report problems with utilities or when utilities need to be shut off during reconstruction, please refer to the following: Alliant Energy (800) 255-4268 or MidAmerican Energy (888) 427-5632.

## **VII. INFORMATION ABOUT DONATIONS AND VOLUNTEERING**

### **Organizations Accepting Monetary Donations for Linn Area Flood Victims:**

#### **American Red Cross**

6300 Rockwell Drive NE  
P.O. Box 10375  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52410  
(319) 393-3500

#### **The Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation**

200 1<sup>st</sup> St. SW

Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404  
(319) 366-2862

**Linn Area Long Term Recovery Coalition**

C/o United Way of East Central Iowa  
1030 Fifth Ave. SE  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403  
(319) 398-5372 or (800) 332-8182

**The Salvation Army**

P.O. Box 8056  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52408-8056  
(319) 294-2207

**Volunteering**

Individuals, groups, and organizations wishing to volunteer to muck, gut, or rebuild homes should call (319) 540-4810.

**VIII. IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

**General Information:**

United Way 2-1-1 Information Line - Call 2-1-1 or (319) 739-4211  
Visit [www.corridorrecovery.org](http://www.corridorrecovery.org) for the latest flood recovery news and community resources

**Financial:**

Horizons Consumer Credit Counseling Service - (319) 398-3576 or 1-800-826-3574  
ISU Linn County Extension - (319) 377-9839  
Iowa Mortgage Help – (877) 622-4866  
IRS Disaster Assistance Hotline – (866) 562-5227  
Iowa Legal Aid – (800) 532-1275

**Family:**

Iowa Concern Hotline – (800) 447-1985  
Foundation 2 Crisis Center Help Line – (319) 362-2174 or 1-800-332-4224  
Abbe Center for Community Mental Health (free counseling) - (319) 398-3562  
Teenline (free, confidential help) – (800) 443-8336  
Cedar Rapids Community Schools – (319) 558-2000

**Home:**

Alliant Energy Residential Electrical Inspection – (800) 255-4268  
Alliant Energy Rebate Program -- (800) 723-7635  
Centers for Disease Control (formaldehyde, etc.) – (800) 232-4636  
MidAmerican Energy Natural Gas Inspection – (800) 432-0586  
MidAmerican Rebate Program – (800) 894-9599

**Cedar Rapids:**

Community Recovery Center – (319) 261-0987  
City of Cedar Rapids Water Dept. – (319) 286-5900  
City of Cedar Rapids Building/Zoning Dept. – (319) 286-5831

City of Cedar Rapids Information Line – (319) 286-5555

**County:**

Linn County Public Health – (319) 892-6000

Linn County Community Services – (319) 892-5600

**IX. Linn County Resources**

Linn County has an extensive list of area resources on its website. This information is updated via a committee of community volunteers on an annual basis; please call each resource before trying to access it. Access the list at

[http://www.linncounty.org/content.asp?Page\\_Id=951&Content\\_Id=3620&Dept\\_Id=11](http://www.linncounty.org/content.asp?Page_Id=951&Content_Id=3620&Dept_Id=11)

Please submit corrections, recommendations or additions for this guide to  
**ez.laltrc.casupport@gmail.com**