



Emergency Sanitation

Household Priorities During an Emergency

CONTAIN WASTE • WASH HANDS • PROTECT WATER • KEEP FOOD AREAS CLEAN

1

CONTAIN
WASTE

2

WASH
HANDS

3

PROTECT
WATER

4

KEEP FOOD
AREAS CLEAN

1. Handwashing & Personal Hygiene

- Wash hands with soap and clean running water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the toilet, changing diapers, handling waste, and before preparing or eating food.
- If clean tap water is unavailable, set up a temporary handwashing station using a clean water jug or container.
- If soap and water are unavailable, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. It is less effective on visibly dirty or greasy hands.
- Use clean water for brushing teeth. Follow local guidance for bathing.

2. Human Waste & Emergency Toilet Use

- Keep fecal waste contained and separated from people, food, cooking areas, and drinking-water supplies.
- If sewer or septic service is unavailable, follow local emergency-management or public-health instructions for temporary toilets and disposal.
- A lined bucket toilet or other contained emergency-toilet system can be kept as a contingency. Securely close waste bags and keep them away from children, pets, food, and water until officials provide disposal instructions.
- Avoid contact with sewage and floodwater. Do not bathe in contaminated rivers, streams, lakes, or floodwater.

3. Food, Water & Surface Protection

- Wash hands before food preparation and keep food-preparation surfaces separated from waste-handling areas.
- Discard food that has contacted floodwater, stormwater, or sewage, including food in packaging that is not waterproof.
- Use safe water for drinking, food preparation, brushing teeth, and wound care when authorities advise tap water may be unsafe.
- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces according to current public-health and product-label instructions.

4. Protect Yourself During Cleanup

- Wear waterproof gloves when handling sewage or human waste; use boots and eye/face protection when splash exposure is possible.
- Cover cuts and open wounds. Wash hands immediately after removing protective equipment.
- Keep children and pets away from sewage, floodwater, and temporary waste-storage areas.

Household Sanitation Supplies

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ☐ Heavy-duty trash bags | ☐ 5-gal bucket + toilet seat/lid | ☐ Non-clumping kitty litter / absorbent |
| ☐ Toilet paper | ☐ Soap | ☐ Hand sanitizer (60%+ alcohol) |
| ☐ Waterproof disposable gloves | ☐ Wet/baby wipes | ☐ Handwashing jug/container |
| ☐ Paper towels / cleaning cloths | ☐ Surface-appropriate disinfectant | ☐ Feminine hygiene products |
| ☐ Diapers + disposal bags, if needed | ☐ Rubber boots / eye protection | |

SOURCE BASIS: CDC emergency WASH/personal-hygiene guidance and FEMA CERT public-health guidance. Follow current local instructions during an actual emergency.

THE HAVEN PROJECT FOUNDATION

EDUCATIONAL & SAFETY DISCLAIMER

PLEASE READ BEFORE USING THIS EMERGENCY SANITATION HANDOUT

Educational Purpose Only

This material is provided for general education and emergency-preparedness planning. It is not medical, legal, engineering, plumbing, environmental-health, sanitation, public-health, or other professional advice, and it does not replace individualized guidance from qualified professionals or government authorities.

Conditions and Emergencies Vary

Sanitation needs and safe practices depend on the type of emergency, the condition of local water and sewer systems, contamination hazards, household medical needs, climate, available supplies, and instructions issued by local authorities. A practice that is appropriate in one emergency may be unsafe in another.

Use Current Official Instructions

Always follow current directions from local public-health officials, emergency-management authorities, water and sewer utilities, CDC, FEMA, EPA, and product manufacturers. If local authorities issue boil-water, do-not-drink, evacuation, sewage, flood, or waste-disposal instructions, those instructions take priority over this handout.

No Testing, Certification, or Guarantee

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Personal Responsibility and Assumption of Risk

Anyone using this information is responsible for evaluating current conditions, obtaining appropriate professional guidance, following official directions and product labels, and deciding what is appropriate for the household. To the fullest extent permitted by law, the user assumes risks arising from the use, misuse, storage, handling, cleaning, disinfection, waste containment, or disposal practices described here. The Haven Project Foundation and the persons and organizations named above are not liable for resulting injury, illness, death, property damage, loss, or expense.

WHEN IN DOUBT: Avoid contact with sewage or contaminated water and follow current instructions from public-health and emergency-management authorities.

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