
Checklist for Infection Control

Concerns when reopening healthcare facilities closed due to extensive water and wind damage

Prior to opening a healthcare facility that has undergone extensive water and wind damage, inspections need to be conducted to determine if the building is salvageable. If the decision is made to proceed with recovery and remediation, building and life safety inspections must be completed before any restoration work is done to the facility. Parts I–IV describe those activities that need to be completed. Parts V–VII provide guidance for infection control review of facilities to be performed before the hospital can reopen.

Prior to opening any portion of a facility such as emergency rooms or clinics, adequate support services need to be available to provide quality care in a safe environment. Contracting with outside services could be considered.

Certification for occupancy must be obtained prior to reopening the facility. Regulations regarding healthcare facility certification and licensing differ from state to state. Refer to specific state and local government resources for more information.

1. Safety Evaluation

The following should be evaluated by facilities experts:

- Structural integrity and missing structural items
- Assessment of hidden moisture
- Electrical system damage, including high voltage, insulation, and power integrity
- Water distribution system damage
- Sewer system damage
- Fire emergency systems damage
- Air handling system damage
- Medical waste and sharps disposal system

2. Water Removal

Water should be removed as soon as possible once the safety of the structure has been verified.

- Pump out standing water
- Wet vacuum residual wetness from floors, carpets, and hard surfaces
- Clean wet vacuums after use and allow to dry

3. Water Damage Assessment and Mold Remediation

- Open the windows in the damaged areas of the building during remediation
- Remove porous items that have been submerged or have visible mold growth or damage
- Minimize dispersion of mold spores by covering the removed items and materials with plastic sheeting (dust-tight chutes leading to dumpsters outside the building may be helpful). Dispose these items as construction waste
- Seal off the ventilation ducts to and from the remediation area and isolate the work area from occupied spaces, if the building is partially occupied
- Scrub and clean hard surfaces with detergents to remove evidence of mold growth (if a biocide is used, follow manufacturer's instructions for use and ventilate the area. Do not mix chlorine-containing biocides with detergents or biocides containing ammonia)