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For Immediate Release
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Cornell Cooperative Extension educators in Schoharie County offer safety precautions for residents returning to homes damaged by flooding.

NY EDEN, the Extension Disaster Education Network, has assembled flood preparation, response, recovery and mitigation resources from a national network of experts, which are available here:

<http://emergencypreparedness.cce.cornell.edu/disasters/Pages/Floods.aspx>

Experts advise that it's best to return home in daylight for best visibility and to be aware of any unsafe power sources. Do not use lanterns or torches until after the premises are safe from gas leaks. Let no one re-enter your home while flooded unless the main electrical switch has been turned off.

Beware of displaced pets or wildlife that may take shelter in flood-damaged buildings. Seek immediate treatment if bitten or injured.

Wear shoes in post-flood areas to reduce the chances of punctures or cuts from nails and other sharp contaminated objects.

Standing water after floods is a breeding place for mosquitoes. Drain all standing water and empty water from outdoor items such as old tires, cans and flower pot bases. Protect yourself with an appropriate insect repellent.

General flood cleanup:

Do not allow children to play in or near flood water or storm drains.

Disinfect all furniture, woodwork and other household surfaces in homes that have flooded.

Wash hands frequently during cleanup to lessen re-contamination of cleaned areas.

To prevent allergic reactions and other health problems caused by mold, replace porous wallboard (from at least 12 inches above the waterline) that has been flood-damaged.

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

Disinfect children's toys with a solution of one cup bleach to five gallons of water.

To prevent producing toxic fumes, do not mix bleach with products that contain ammonia.

To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, do not burn charcoal or use gasoline-powered generators or pumps indoors.

Try to rest and conserve energy and avoid heat stress. Persons with heart conditions and other illnesses should avoid strenuous exertion.

Tips about food after a flood:

Do not eat food that has been in contact with flood water.

If electricity has been off, refrigerated food may have spoiled. Discard any food that has been at room temperature for more than two hours or if it has an unusual odor or color. Thawed food from freezers may be safe for consumption or refreezing if it is still partially frozen or is refrigerator cold.

Babies on formula should be given ready-to-feed formula or powdered formula prepared with bottled drinking water.

Wash hands with soap and disinfected water before eating or handling food, after clean-up work and after handling flood water-contaminated items.

Wounds and Floodwater:

Persons with puncture wounds or cuts exposed to flood water could be at risk of contracting tetanus and may need to have a tetanus shot to prevent infection.

Learn more about how to document losses and prevent further damage to flooding at this link:<http://www.extension.org/pages/13243/floods:-first-entry-of-a-flooded-ho...> The site also allows people to ask the experts questions about dealing with flood damage. Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities.

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