

Safety Alert

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After Flood Clean Up

Purpose

This safety alert is to remind all personnel of the presence of hazards associated with cleaning up after floods.

Issues

Clearing of debris, mud and dirty water can present real health risks and every precaution is to be taken.

Hazards likely to be encountered:

- Electrical hazards including solar photovoltaic systems
- Contaminated flood water (sewage and other matter)
- Biological hazards such as hepatitis, tetanus, leptospirosis, melioidosis, mosquito borne diseases
- Dangerous wildlife such as snakes, spiders, crocodiles
- Mould
- Asbestos materials
- Sharps such as nails, broken glass, and other jagged objects
- Open cuts and scratches which can easily become infected

Immediate and preventative actions

- Prior to works, ensure any relevant power supply is safe or has been de-energised, this includes solar panels and wiring as still can produce voltage and therefore must also be de energised;
- Wear full protective clothing including long sleeve shirt, long pants, gloves, and protective footwear;
- Utilise respiratory protection to assist in the removal of odours emanating from the flood material or animal carcasses;
- Do not interact with dangerous wildlife, make note of the sighting and advise your senior officer;
- Material that may be asbestos containing material (ACM) should not be disturbed, other than by a qualified person.
- All open cuts and scratches need to be appropriately covered prior to commencing work
- Maintain good hygiene including thoroughly wash your hands with soap or other disinfectant before eating or smoking

Additional information

- Maintain fluid intake
- Wear appropriate sun protection when working outdoors
- Stay away from fallen powerlines
- Protect yourself against mosquito bites
- Seek immediate treatment for any injuries, cuts, scratches etc
- If asbestos or suspected asbestos is found, refer to local council for removal advice.


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