

MARCH 15, 2018 @ 10:25 AM

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Steps to Take After a Flood, Fire or Other Natural Disaster

After a disaster or emergency such as a flood, fire, hurricane, tornado or earthquake, your safety is what is most important. Here are a few things you can do after disaster strikes:

Find a safe place to stay

The [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#) can provide housing assistance if your home was damaged or destroyed. Call 800-462-9029 for assistance. You should also look for volunteers with the [American Red Cross](#), which helps provide shelter for people in disaster situations.

Check in with your command.

Following certain catastrophic events, the Secretary of Defense may direct all Department of Defense-affiliated people in an affected area to check in. Check in online with your service branch's Personnel Accountability and Assessment System:

- [Fourth Estate Personnel Accountability and Assessment System](#)
- [Army Disaster Personnel Accountability and Assessment System](#)
- [Marine Online](#)
- [Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System](#)
- [Air Force Personnel Accountability and Assessment System.](#)

You can also check in over the phone:

- Call 800-833-6622 for Army
- Call 816-394-7232 for Marine Corps
- Call 877-414-5358 for Navy

- Call 800-435-9941 for Air Force.

Be safe, inside and outside your home.

If your home has been damaged, your power lines and gas lines may have sustained damage also. Be sure to do the following:

- Turn off your gas and electricity if you can do so safely.
- Report any downed power lines or broken gas lines right away.
- Avoid puddles and other standing water outside as you could get a shock from underground or downed power lines.
- If you see any wires on the ground, assume all are dangerous including cable TV lines.
- Also watch out for leaking gas lines and propane containers, gasoline that has leaked from vehicles and lighter fluid or paint thinner that has spilled.

When you're out, stay alert as structures that are still standing may fall in on you or collapse under you.

Provide ventilation for fuel-burning devices.

If you are using kerosene lamps, wood stoves, fireplaces, gas-powered pumps or generators, provide plenty of ventilation in the area so that carbon monoxide does not build up. Carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless gas, and it can be deadly. It is best not to use certain carbon monoxide-producing devices indoors, but if you have no other choice, be sure and watch people around you for symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, which include:

- Mild headaches that persist or get worse
- Shortness of breath
- Irritability
- Poor judgment
- Memory loss
- Rapid fatigue.

If any of these symptoms occur in people around you, seek medical attention immediately.

Stay informed

Depending on the disaster, radio and TV reports may provide news through the emergency alert system. This system, along with news or government agencies' social media sites, can provide information about what to do, where to go and how to contact local disaster relief services.

Disasters can be upsetting experiences for everyone involved. Reach out to Military OneSource online or by phone at 800-342-9647 if you are, or someone in your family is, facing disaster-related issues. OCONUS/International? [Click here for calling options.](#)