

Repairing your house after a flood

Repair work should only be undertaken when your house is clean of all mud, silt and debris, and is completely dry. If you have insurance, you need to check first with your insurance provider before entering the property or making any changes.

When you start repair work

When you decide to repair your home, make sure that the person you choose to undertake repairs is licensed.

Building services providers (including builders, designers and building surveyors), plumbers, gas-fitters and electricians must hold certain licences in order to perform certain work. Not all types of building work require a licence, such as painting, concreting and landscaping.

You can find a licensed tradesperson by searching the database on the Consumer, Building and Occupational Services website at www.cbos.tas.gov.au

You will also need to check if you need building approval before undertaking extensive repair work on your property, particularly if the work affects structural components of the house. For more information contact your local council or a building surveyor.

Water damage

Contact with water can be damaging to some building materials. Depending on the type of building products, damage may occur immediately or after prolonged exposure to water.

Before you start work on repairing your home, think about choosing building materials that have a higher water-resistant rating. This may help to minimise damage from floods and may also make it quicker and easier for you to clean up if you are affected by floods in the future.

Other things to consider

There are other things that you can do to make your property more flood resilient, including:

- Meter boxes – if replacing wiring, think about the location of meter boxes and/or electrical switches. Locating items higher up on walls may reduce the likelihood of having to replace wiring in the future.
- Walls – if the water partly damaged the lower level of walls in your home, consider using water resistant materials on lower parts of the walls. Hardwood timber panelling or ceramic wall tiles used partway up the walls may reduce damage and costs associated with rebuilding in the future.
- Water tanks – anchoring your water tank to the ground will help protect your property and other properties during a flood event.

Onsite wastewater treatment systems

Safe disposal of wastewater is essential to protect your health and the health of others. If you live in a flood-affected area and flood waters have affected your property, your septic tank system (also known as an on-site wastewater system) may also be affected.

Wastewater from your home contains sewage from your toilet and grey water from your bathroom, kitchen and laundry. Wastewater contains human disease-causing microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses and parasites. Diseases can be transmitted via wastewater if appropriate measures are not taken.

The following steps are recommended:

- Ensure children and pets are kept away from wastewater affected areas.
- Beware of open covers and/or pits.
- Check for odour around the tank.
- Check for sewerage backing up through the household toilets, showers and sinks.

If you have concerns about your wastewater system following a flooding event, you should contact a licensed plumber or service technician and your local council.

More information

For more information on repairing your house after a flood, contact Consumer, Building and Occupational Services, visit www.cbos.tas.gov.au or call 1 300 65 44 99 or email cbos.info@justice.tas.gov.au