

Article for June 24, 2015

Whew! With all we've been through so far this month and most of last month with rains and flooding, I almost don't want to even jump in a pool! Well, I might not go that far – but you get the idea!

The floods that began in May were finally subsiding last week; then along came Tropical Storm Bill! That storm dropped rain over a large portion of our state and only added to the misery of swollen creeks and rivers. It has been interesting, to say the least!

So, as the water soaks into the ground and pours back into the Gulf, we can see a ray of sunshine! Or is that ray of sunshine reflecting on nasty, unclean items left from the moisture of the previous storms? Even long after the waters have receded, we might discover mold or mildew, or both.

Unfortunately, mold and mildew can present serious and ongoing health issues. Your best defense is to treat or discard mold-infected and mildew-infected items quickly! As soon as you discover them, you need to do something about them!

FEMA offers advice on how to deal with mold and mildew and suggests that victims start a post-flood cleanup by sorting all items exposed to floodwaters. According to their website, wood and upholstered furniture and other porous materials can trap mold and may need to be discarded. Carpeting presents a problem because drying it does not remove mold spores. Carpets with mold and mildew should be removed. Glass, plastic and metal objects and other items made of hardened or nonporous materials can often be cleaned, disinfected and reused.

The FEMA website also offers tips on how best to clean, disinfect and dry all flood-dampened surfaces to ensure a safe and effective cleanup. You can find that information at www.fema.gov. The website www.redcross.org offers information on what to do when you return to your home after a flood and has another publication that focuses on repairing your flooded home. Those are available in English and Spanish on that website. When you visit the <http://floodsafety.com/national/property/cleanup/> website, you can view a video of one woman's personal experience with flooding, along with information on typical house flood damages and cleanup requirements. These are three very good websites to visit and gain insights on how you can best cleanup your home or business after a flood.

Also, don't forget to take care of yourself. If you were exposed to floodwaters or are allergic to mold and mildew, you may want to contact your physician or the Texas Department of State Health Services to get advice on what kinds of medical attention you may benefit from, such as getting a current Tetanus shot, if you haven't had one in a number of years.

Getting flood damaged properties cleaned up as soon as possible in a safe manner is vital! Let's look for those rays of sunshine and Be Safe Out There!

