



Prescriptions for PREVENTION



Guidance from the Western States
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit

Natural Disasters



Did you know?

Natural disasters including floods, hurricanes and wildfires pose immediate danger and can also have lasting impacts including exposures to toxic chemicals in our streets, yards and homes. Disruptions from disasters can sometimes limit our access to key resources like healthy food, safe water, medications, and power, putting families in dangerous situations.



Do

During a disaster:

- ✓ **Have an emergency evacuation plan** and a “go bag” with necessities to help keep your family safe.
- ✓ **Check out [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov)** for helpful information before, during and after many different kinds of disasters (like floods, wildfires, winter storms and many others).
- ✓ **Monitor local air quality:**
 - ✓ **Stay inside** if outdoor air quality is poor;
 - ✓ **When outdoors on bad air days**, wear an **appropriate mask**. NIOSH certified N95 masks are the best option.
- ✓ **Have and maintain** carbon monoxide and smoke detectors in your home.

If engaging in cleanup activities following a disaster:

- ✓ Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE);
- ✓ Change out of these items at the cleanup site or before entering your home and wash them separately;
- ✓ Leave your shoes at the worksite or outside;
- ✓ Shower immediately.



Don't

- ✗ **Do not use any gas or diesel-powered appliances (like grills or generators) indoors.** Use generators **safely** to prevent carbon monoxide build up.
- ✗ **Do not return to your home after a disaster until it is safe to do so:**
 - **Key cleanup** should have been done;
 - **Power lines** must be secured;
 - **Safe water, sanitation, and emergency medical care** should be accessible.
- ✗ **Do not have children, teens, or pregnant people assist with disaster clean up.** They are especially vulnerable to exposures.
- ✗ **Do not allow children to play in flood waters**, which can also carry debris, toxic chemicals and bacteria.
- ✗ **Do not let children stay in homes contaminated with mold** or at high risk for mold contamination post-flooding.



For more information, scan the code or visit
<https://wspehsu.ucsf.edu/projects/prescriptions-for-prevention-exposure-sources/>