WHAT TO DO AFTER A FLOOD
This fact sheet provides tips for protecting yourself and your family from the dangers of flooding and flash floods.

RETURNING HOME
Do not turn on the lights or do anything that could cause a spark. Most of your gas or electric service department do not return until you told it is safe.
Consult your utility company about using electrical equipment, including power generators.
Avoid any downed power lines or wires in standing water which may contain glass or metal fragments.

TETANUS SHOTS
If you have been exposed to floodwaters or have suffered injuries as a result of the flood, obtain a tetanus shot from your local county health department or doctor if you haven’t received one in the last 5 years.
If you have open cuts or wounds, take extreme precautions when walking through floodwaters to prevent contracting tetanus.

CLEANUP OF HOME AND FLOOD WATER
If the cleanup is a smaller job that you can do yourself, take precautions by wearing goggles, fitted mask (if appropriate), rubber boots, waterproof gloves, and long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
If the cleanup is a large job, call a professional who is experienced in cleaning up mold.
Dry out your house when you remove your house by using fans, air conditioning units, and dehumidifiers. Thoroughly clean all hard surfaces (flooring, furniture, countertops, appliances, circles, etc.) with hot water and laundry or dish detergent. Disinfect with a household unscented chlorine bleach solution.
To make and use a household bleach solution: Add 1 tablespoon of bleach to 1 quart (4 cups) of water, let stand for 3 minutes, then rinse the surface with clean water.
Remove and discard drywall and insulation that has been contaminated with sewage or flood waters. Seek immediate medical attention if you become injured or ill.
After completing the cleanup, wash your hands with soap and water. Use water that has been boiled for 1 minute (allow the water to cool before washing your hands).
Wash clothes worn during flood cleanup activities and clothes contaminated with flood or sewage water in hot water and detergent separate from uncontaminated clothes and linen.

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM MOLD
Keep children, elderly, and people with asthma, allergies, breathing conditions or weakened immune systems away from mold.
Minimize the spread of mold spores by decreasing foot traffic, avoid rapid movements, and clean moldy objects when removing them.
Removal and cleaning are important because even dead mold may cause allergic reactions in some people. Make sure the working area is well ventilated.
Refer to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) document, A Brief Guide to Mold and Moisture In Your Home.

SAFE WELL WATER
Do not drink the water from your well without testing it! Flooding may contaminate water into your well, even if your well was not submerged by floodwaters. There is also a danger of electric shock from well components, the well pump or equipment until it has been checked by a qualified electrician, well contractor, or pump contractor.
Visit azhealth.gov/wellwater for information on how to test and disinfect your well.

FOOD SAFETY
Do not eat any food that may have come into contact with flood water. When in doubt, throw it out.
Discard any food without a waterproof container, such as containers with screw-caps, snap-lids, crimped cap (food grade bottle), and home canned foods. If there is any chance that the can came into contact with flood water.
Undamaged, commercially canned foods can be saved if you remove the can label, thoroughly wash the cans, and disinfet them. Re-label your cans and include the expiration date.

MOSQUIATO-BORNE ILLNESS
Standing water from flooding can result in an increased risk for mosquito-borne illnesses like West Nile Virus. People returning to flooded areas should protect themselves from mosquitoes by learning how to reduce the number of mosquitos around their home and personal precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

AGENCY RESOURCES WEBSITE
Just In Case Arizona Household Disaster Checklist www.justincasearizona.com
AZ Emergency Management Emergency Updates http://azem.gov
AdHs - Climate & Health Flood Safety Information www.adhs.gov
AdHs - Environnmental Toxicology Well Water Testing www.azhealth.gov/wellwater
Environmental Protection Agency Mold Cleanup Information epa.gov/mold

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES