



RECOVERY GUIDE

Disaster Recovery

In the face of devastating and life-altering damage, it is not uncommon for families to feel frustrated and concerned. The road to recovery takes time. Everyone has an important role to play in repairing and rebuilding our communities, and there are steps you can take to ensure the safety of you and your family as you move forward. It's also important to know you are not alone. Your community, local, state and federal governments, the private sector, non-profits, faith community and charitable organizations are here to help.

It's important to work with your local emergency management office, local government, insurance company and community organizations as you and your family embark on the road to recovery. The recovery guide provides general post-disaster safety information and possible public sector recovery resources and private sector, non-profit, organizations that are available to assist you, your family and your community after a major disaster.

If Flooding Occured

Flooding and heavy rains increase the risk of human exposure to pollutants, which may cause illness. Contaminants are transported in rainwater as it travels over the land; ending up in rivers, lakes and streams. This mix of rain and pollution can pose risks to human health and safety.

- » Use extreme caution and avoid unnecessary risks if you encounter covered roads or fast-moving waters. The water may be deeper and moving faster than you think.
- » Floodwaters may contain debris that can break the skin or entrap legs and arms. Do not allow children and pets to play in floodwaters.
- » Do not wade through floodwaters with broken skin. Viruses and other organisms can infect wounds causing a more serious illness.
- » Avoid swimming or wading in ditches, streams, and rivers for at least three days following a rain event. During flood events, avoid swimming and wading until waters return to normal levels.
- » If you cannot avoid wading through floodwaters, be sure to wash exposed skin and clothing with soap and water.
- » If you have an underlying illness like diabetes, liver disease, or cancer, you are more vulnerable to infections and should avoid contact with floodwaters.

Flood Clean-Up Tips

- » Clean and disinfect anything that got wet. Mud left from floodwater can contain sewage, bacteria and harmful chemicals.
- » Air out enclosed spaces by opening all doors and windows whenever you are present. Leave as many windows open when you are not present as security concerns allow.
- » Discard wet porous materials such as mattresses and upholstered furniture, especially those with visible fungal growth. Tear out flooring, paneling, drywall, insulation and electrical outlets saturated by floodwater.

RETURNING HOME



As you return home and begin the recovery phase, keep the following safety tips in mind:

- » Do not enter a building until it has been inspected for damage to the electrical system, gas lines, septic systems and water lines or wells.
- » Watch for fallen objects and downed electrical wires; report power outages and downed power lines to your local utility provider.
- » Use caution or seek professional assistance when removing fallen trees, cleaning up debris or using equipment, such as chain saws.
- » Contact your local emergency management office or locality to learn about organizations that will assist with residential cleanup efforts.
- » If you lost power, report it to Dominion Energy, Appalachian Power or your local electrical provider or cooperative.
 - » **Dominion Energy**
Report outages and check your status at [dominionenergy.com/outages](https://www.dominionenergy.com/outages). Report downed lines and other safety hazards at 866.366.4357.
 - » **Appalachian Power**
Report outages and check your status at [AppalachianPower.com/outages](https://www.AppalachianPower.com/outages). Report downed lines and other safety hazards at 1.800.956.4237.
- » If you have property damage after a disaster:
 - » Take photos of the damage to your property,
 - » Contact your insurance provider to report damage, and
 - » Report damages to your city or county's office of emergency management, reporting damage allows your locality to include your losses in its damage assessment.

FOOD + WATER SAFETY

In the case of an electrical outage, it is important to take careful precautions to ensure food safety. The risk of food poisoning is heightened when refrigerators and ovens are inoperable.

- » A full cooler or freezer will maintain its cold temperatures longer than one that is partially filled, so it is important to pack plenty of extra ice, dry ice or freezer packs to insure a constant cold temperature if the power is going to be out for a prolonged period of time.
 - » The refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened.
 - » A full freezer will keep the temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full) if the door remains closed.
- » Discard any food that has been at room temperature for over two hours, and any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture. **When in doubt, throw it out!**
- » Cook food to the proper temperature to assure that any foodborne bacteria that may be present is destroyed. If at any point the food was above 40° F for two hours or more — discard it.
- » Information on the safety of public water sources and “Boil Water” procedures, is available at: www.vdh.virginia.gov/drinking-water/.
- » Residents and facilities that provide water to the public from private wells or septic systems submerged by floodwaters should take extra precautions. For more information, please visit: www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-health/onsite-sewage-water-services-updated/before-and-after-the-storm-private-wells-and-onsite-sewage-systems/.
- » Information regarding food safety for restaurant operators is available online at: www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-health/food-safety-in-virginia/food-operators/restaurant-preparedness/.

For more information about food safety after a disaster, visit www.vdh.virginia.gov/weather/FoodSafety.htm.



Possible Recovery Resources

LOCAL

Report disaster damage to your home and business to your locality's office of emergency management.

Contact your city or county's department of Social Services, Human Services, Community Services Board, Public Health, Housing and local emergency management office to access additional resources and information after a disaster.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) *Individuals and Households Program (IHP)*

If a Presidential disaster declaration is made, FEMA's Individuals and Households Program **may** provide financial help or direct services to those who have necessary expenses and serious needs if they are unable to meet these needs through other means. Contact the FEMA Individuals and Households Program at 800.621.FEMA.

Public Assistance: **Local, State, Tribal and Private Nonprofit**

FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) grant program **may** provide federal assistance to government organizations and certain private nonprofit (PNP) organizations if a Presidential disaster declaration is declared.

PA provides grants to state, tribal, territorial, local governments and certain types of PNP organizations, so that communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies. Contact the FEMA Public Assistance Division at 202.646.3834.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (SBA)

The SBA can loan money to homeowners, renters and business owners. Homeowners may borrow up to \$200,000 for disaster related home repairs. Homeowners and renters may borrow up to \$40,000 to replace disaster-damaged personal property including vehicles. The SBA may not duplicate benefits from your insurance or FEMA. You may receive an SBA referral when you apply with FEMA. Contact the SBA at 800.659.2955 from 8 a.m. - 9 p.m., Mon. - Fri. or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)

Visit the USDA Disaster Resource Center at USDA.gov. You will find information about specific disasters and emergencies, how to prepare, recover, and help build long-term resilience, as well as information about USDA assistance during disaster events.

Who to Call

2-1-1

24/7, statewide trained professionals who listen to your situation and offer sources of help using one of the largest databases of health and human services in Virginia. Visit www.211virginia.org for more information.

3-1-1

In select localities throughout the Commonwealth, 3-1-1 connects callers to their local government, non-emergency, citizen services including information, services, key contacts and programs.

5-1-1

"Know Before You Go," offers real-time traffic information throughout the Commonwealth. Anytime you need it, anywhere you are. For more information, visit www.511virginia.org.

8-1-1

"Call Before You Dig - It's the Law," is a free Virginia communications center for excavators, contractors, property owners and those planning any kind of excavation or digging. When recovering from a disaster, an individual or business may plan to excavate. Participating utilities will locate and mark their underground facilities and lines in advance to prevent a possible injury, damage or fines.

9-1-1

For emergencies only, including fire, medical, reporting accidents, crimes in progress and suspicious individuals or events. 9-1-1 is not to be used for traffic or weather updates and information request, please keep the lines clear for those seeking emergency support.

Organizations

VISIT WWW.VAEMERGENCY.GOV/GET-INVOLVED TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP AFTER A DISASTER.

National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
www.nvoad.org

Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
www.vavoad.org

Virginia Disaster Relief Fund
www.vaemergency.gov/get-involved/virginia-disaster-relief