



# WATER INTRUSION - CLEANUP AND MOLD PREVENTION

*Prepared by Chief Executive Office, Risk Management Branch  
Loss Control and Prevention Section*

3333 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1000, Los Angeles, CA 90010

**Contact Loss Control and Prevention at (213) 738-2269 for additional information**

The following guidelines should be implemented within 24 to 48 hours after a water intrusion incident to minimize the potential for mold proliferation.

<b><i>Water-Damaged Material</i></b>	<b><i>Actions</i></b>
<b>Books and papers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discard non-valuable books and paper.</li> <li>• Photocopy valuable/important items; discard originals.</li> <li>• Freeze (in frost-free freezers) or freeze-dry.</li> </ul>
<b>Carpet and backing (dry within 24 to 48 hours)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove water with water extraction vacuum.</li> <li>• Reduce ambient humidity levels with dehumidifiers.</li> <li>• Accelerate drying process with fans.</li> </ul>
<b>Ceiling tiles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discard and replace.</li> </ul>
<b>Cellulose insulation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discard and replace.</li> </ul>
<b>Concrete or cinder block surfaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove water with water extraction vacuum.</li> <li>• Accelerate drying process with dehumidifiers, fans, and/or heaters.</li> </ul>
<b>Fiberglass insulation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discard and replace.</li> </ul>
<b>Porous hard surfaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacuum or damp wipe with water and mild detergent and allow to dry; scrub if necessary.</li> <li>• Check to make sure underflooring is dry. Dry if necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>Non-porous, hard surfaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacuum or damp wipe with water and mild detergent and allow to dry; scrub if necessary</li> </ul>
<b>Upholstered furniture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove water with water extraction vacuum.</li> <li>• Accelerate drying process with dehumidifiers, fans, and/or heaters.</li> <li>• May be difficult to completely dry within 48 hours. If the piece is valuable, consider consulting a restoration/water damage professional specializing in furniture.</li> </ul>
<b>Wallboard (drywall and gypsum board)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be dried in place if there is no obvious swelling and the seams are intact. If not, remove, discard and replace.</li> <li>• Ventilate the wall cavity, if possible.</li> </ul>
<b>Window drapes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow laundering or cleaning instructions recommended by the manufacturer.</li> </ul>
<b>Wood surfaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove moisture immediately and use dehumidifiers, gentle heat, and fans for drying.</li> <li>• Treated or finished wood surfaces may be cleaned with mild detergent and clean water and allowed to dry.</li> <li>• Wet paneling should be pried away from wall for drying.</li> </ul>

Note: These guidelines are for clean water only. Do not use fans before determining that the water is clean and sanitary. If the water source is contaminated with sewage, then protective equipment (e.g. rubber gloves, safety goggles, disposable coverall, rubber boots or shoe covers) should be used.