

# What to do if your property is damaged by flooding

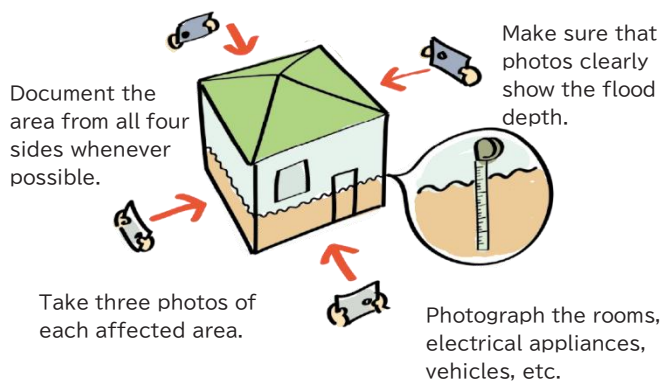
## Recovering from a Flood Disaster

This flyer summarizes the general procedures for recovering from flooding. Take it slow and start with what you can do immediately.

### 1 Document the damage before you start cleaning up.

- Take photos or videos showing the damage.
- Document the outside of your house from various angles to show the flood depth.
- Document the damage inside the rooms of the house and the damage to items such as bikes outside your house.

These photos will help you explain the damage when you later carry out administrative procedures and file insurance claims.



### 2 Report the damage.

- Contact your fire insurance, automobile insurance, and cooperative insurance providers.
- If you have lost your insurance certificates or are unsure of the coverage details, contact the following.

Casualty insurance	Natural Disaster Non-life Insurance Policy Inquiry Center (General Insurance Association of Japan)
	<b>Tel: 0120-501331</b> (Toll-free)
	9:15 am–5:00 pm Closed on weekends, holidays, and the year-end/new year holidays
Cooperative insurance	Japanese Cooperative Insurance Association
	<b>Tel: 0570-023140</b> (Toll applies)
	9:00 am–5:00 pm Closed on weekends, holidays, and the year-end/new year holidays

\* The above contact points are available to residents in areas designated by the Disaster Relief Act.

### 3 Obtain a Disaster Victim Certificate (*Risai Shomeisho*)

- Apply for a Disaster Victim Certificate at your city/town/village office.
- Undergo a damage assessment.
- The property damage assessment has two stages: the primary exterior inspection and the secondary interior inspection.

The Disaster Victim Certificate certifies the extent of property damage caused by a disaster. Once you apply, the municipality will conduct an inspection to determine your property's classification.

The table to the right lists the damage classifications and corresponding severity levels. The damage percentage is determined based on various factors in accordance with national guidelines, including the building type and whether the damage was caused by flooding or a landslide.

If you disagree with the primary inspection results, you can request a secondary inspection or a re-inspection.

For details of the support available for each classification, please see "What to do if your property has been damaged by flooding (Leaflet version)" (available only in Japanese).



Classification (Japanese pronunciation)	Damage percentage
Total destruction <i>Zenkai</i>	50% or more
Significant partial destruction <i>Daikibo Hankai</i>	40% or more but less than 50%
Moderate-scale partial destruction <i>Chukibo Hankai</i>	30% or more but less than 40%
Partial destruction <i>Hankai</i>	20% or more but less than 30%
Semi partial destruction <i>Jun Hankai</i>	10% or more but less than 20%
Partially damaged <i>Ichibu Sonkai</i>	Less than 10%

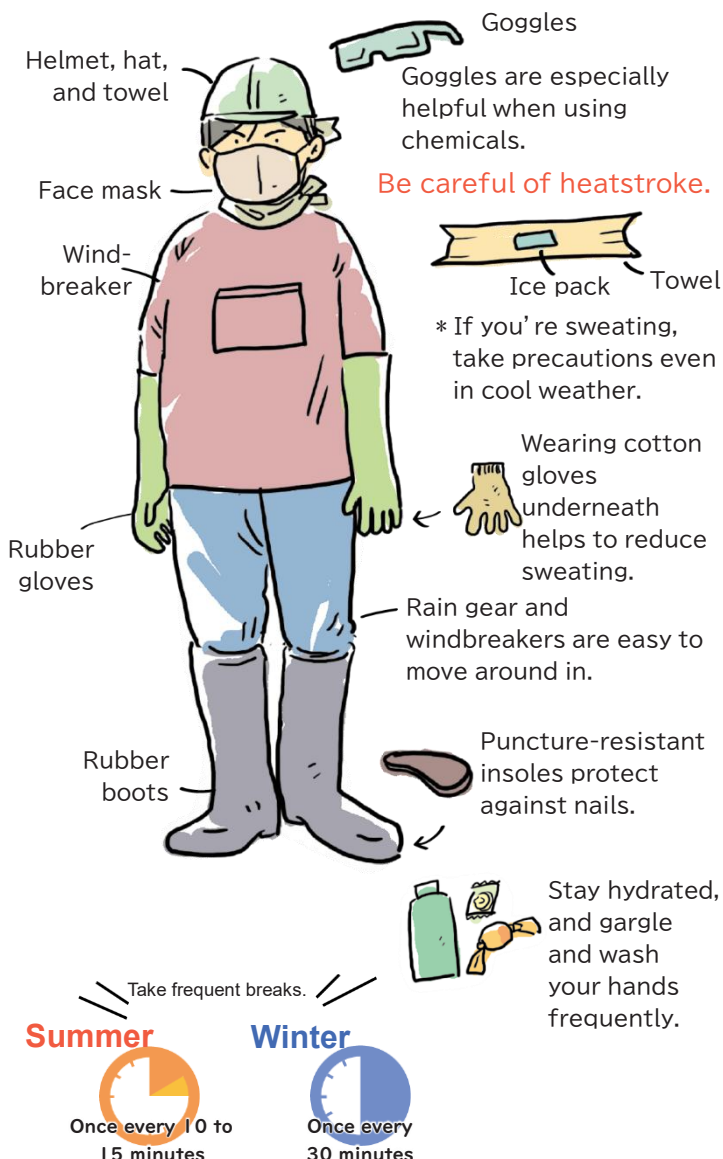
# 4 Dispose of wet furniture and electrical appliances.

- When cleaning up, wear clothing that covers up your skin.
- Take frequent breaks and stay hydrated.
- Carefully watch small children, as they are prone to breathing in harmful substances.

Sort wet furniture and electrical appliances into: items that are still usable, items that can be salvaged if cleaned, and items to discard. Set aside any items you are unsure about for deciding on later.

In Japan, trash must generally be separated, so follow your municipality's instructions.

## Take precautions to prevent heatstroke and injuries while cleaning.



## How to use disinfectants

- When cleaning dishes and other items, use disinfectants appropriately.

When using disinfectants such as chlorine-based bleach (for example, Kitchen Haite) or antiseptic detergent (benzalkonium chloride solution, such as "Osvan S"), carefully read the instructions and wear gloves.

Avoid using slaked lime, which may cause burns.



Disinfectant	Target items and cleaning methods
Sodium hypochlorite (household chlorine-based bleach may be used)	<b>Tableware, sinks, and bathtubs</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Wash with dish soap and water.</li> <li>2) Soak in diluted disinfectant for 5 minutes or wipe with a cloth soaked in disinfectant, and then rinse with water or wipe with a damp cloth.</li> <li>3) Dry thoroughly.</li> </ol> <p><b>Dilute to 0.02%.</b></p>
Disinfectant alcohol	<b>Furniture and floors</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Rinse off any mud or wipe with a damp cloth, and then dry thoroughly.</li> <li>2) Wipe thoroughly with a cloth soaked in the prepared solution.</li> <li>3) Wipe any metal or wooden surfaces again with a damp cloth to prevent discoloration.</li> </ol> <p><b>Dilute to 0.1%.</b></p>
10% benzalkonium chloride (antiseptic detergent)	<p><b>Use undiluted.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Wash with soap and water.</li> <li>2) Wipe with a cloth soaked in alcohol.</li> </ol> <p>* Use alcohol with a concentration of 70% or higher. * Keep away from flames.</p> <p><b>Dilute to 0.1%.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Rinse off any dirt (including mud) or wipe with a damp cloth, and then dry thoroughly.</li> <li>2) Wipe thoroughly with a cloth soaked in the prepared solution.</li> </ol>

Reference: Japanese Society for Infection Prevention and Control  
Hygiene Measures and Disinfection Methods for Households Experiencing Floods and Water Damage

## The most effective way to remove mud is rinsing with water.

- Rinsing with a hose alone is sufficient to remove mud.

Removing mud with water helps to prevent mold growth. Use caution with high-pressure washers because they may damage household items.





# How should water-damaged items be treated?

## Automobiles and farm equipment

- Do not start the engine. Contact a repair shop.
- If you will not be using the vehicle for a while, remove the vehicle registration and license plate (anti-theft measure).
- Beware of scammers claiming to offer free disposal services.



## Kitchen appliances, toilets, bathrooms, and sinks



- These may be usable if the electrical components did not get wet.
- Even if they appear to be functioning properly, the back surfaces against walls take time to dry and are prone to mold.

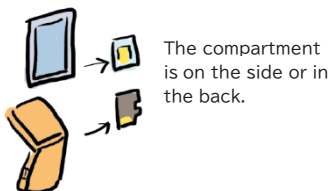
## Tatami mats, carpets, futons, and sofas



- These cannot be used if they have been submerged.
- Wet tatami mats may generate heat. Dispose of them separately from other waste.

## Mobile phones, including smartphones

- Without turning on the device, remove the battery, SIM card, and SD card, and store them.
- If the device has been submerged in water, turn off the power and dry it out, even if it is waterproof.
- Consult your nearest mobile phone shop.



The compartment is on the side or in the back.

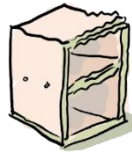
## Air conditioners and water heaters



- These may be salvageable if they have not been turned on.
- Have an electrician inspect them.

## Wardrobes and shelves

- Paulownia chests and solid wood furniture may be salvageable if washed and dried.
- Plywood or laminated wood furniture is normally unusable. It warps easily, and may develop mold even after drying.



## Architectural fittings (sliding doors, shoji, and regular doors)



- Solid wood lattices and frames can be reused after washing and drying.

## Albums and photos

- You do not have to throw them away even if they get wet.
- Rinse photos with water and air-dry them.
- If you cannot wash an album immediately, open it to let it dry.
- Separate stacked photos.
- If photos have stuck together, soak them in water to separate them.
- Consider taking photos of photographs to preserve them digitally.



"How to wash photos" by Fujifilm (Japanese)



## Solar power generation systems



- These may be usable if the relevant equipment is repaired.

\* Under the Disaster Relief Act, manufacturers may offer free repairs, so consult them first.

## Household appliances (refrigerators, washing machines, TVs, rice cookers, etc.)



Even if they initially work, there is still a risk of short circuits.

- They often become unusable when wet.
- Sometimes they work temporarily but may fail later.

\* Water-damaged items may be exempt from the disposal fees for "Designated Home Appliance Recycling Items."

## Cash, bankbooks, etc.

- Dirty cash may be exchanged for new bills under certain conditions.
- During disasters, banks may offer special accommodations even without your bankbook or seal, so consult your bank or financial institution.

## When in doubt, keep them.

If you are unsure, keep the items for now to avoid regret.

I was tired and felt rushed, so I threw them away.

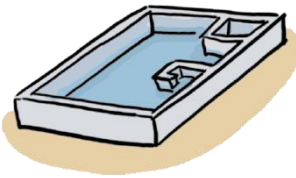


But replacing them is difficult, and some items are not available for purchase.

## 5 Check under floors and behind walls.

- Check for water and mud under floors and behind walls.
- Even if floors and walls appear intact, mold may be growing where you cannot see.
- Promptly remove any wet insulating materials.

Moisture and mud can cause unpleasant odors and, if left untreated, mold may grow, leading to health problems. In Japanese-style rooms, lift the tatami mats. In Western-style rooms with flooring or carpeting, check under the floor via an inspection hatch or foundation vent. If water is seeping from the foundation (as shown in the photo on the right), water may be pooling underneath.



<Mat foundation>

Once water enters the concrete enclosure, it rarely drains out.



Water is seeping out even though it is not raining.



Mud has accumulated under the floor.



Wet insulation behind walls



Mold growing behind drywall or engineered wood walls

## 6 Get help with house repairs.

- Simple cleanup and tidying work can sometimes be done by volunteers.
- Some volunteers and disaster relief NPO personnel have extensive experience in dealing with flood-damaged homes.
- For home repairs, consult construction companies or local contractors.

For volunteer cleanup services, contact your local social welfare council (Disaster Volunteer Center).

Government subsidies may be available for home repairs. Gather reliable information by contacting your city/town/village office or attending a free consultation session offered by a bar association.



Volunteers cleaning up



Inspection by a disaster relief NPO



**What to do if your property has been damaged by flooding**  
(Leaflet edition – Japanese only)

A more detailed leaflet edition of this flyer is available. Visit the website on the right or contact the secretariat.

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