

Attention: Food Business Owners

What to do if your food business has been inundated with flood waters or affected by flood related power cuts

Waste

Following a flood all waste is to be disposed of as soon as possible otherwise the risk of disease and harbourage of pests increases.

It is possible that food will require disposal if your food business has been affected by a flood.

Food must be disposed if;

- It has come into contact with flood water.
- It requires refrigeration and has been over 5 degrees celcius for more than two hours due to power cuts.

When assessing whether food needs to be disposed of, use the principle 'If in doubt throw it out'.

Electrical

An electrician should inspect flood affected premises to check that all electrical equipment that has been inundated by floodwaters is safe to operate.

Cleaning

Before using water to clean surfaces. check with Tas Water to ensure the water supply is potable and safe for use. The following matters should also be considered following flood inundation:

Wall cavities, cavities behind kickboards and other structural voids that have been subject to inundation should be drained and cleaned. To check for water inundation in wall cavities, drilling holes near the base should indicate whether further action is required.

The integrity of laminated surfaces needs to be checked. Water permeation of the timber may cause buckling or separation rendering the laminated material impossible to disinfect.

If a product cannot be chemically or heat treated it should be disposed of, as disinfection cannot be guaranteed.

Wall cavities of cool/freezer rooms should be checked for water inundation. Holes can be drilled into the wall, which will indicate the extent of water infiltration. If given a few weeks to dry and certification is granted by a qualified refrigeration expert that the integrity of the structure is sound and the walls are sealed then approval for reuse should be given.

Disinfection Procedures

Heat

Methods for disinfection using heat are as follows:

Where boiling is not possible or practical, items should be cleaned and then immersed for a minimum 10 minutes in water above 70 degrees celcius.

Where there are dishwashers, the temperature of the washing or rinsing water usually can be adjusted to achieve the above temperature.

Chemical Disinfectants

If the application of heat is not possible use a chemical disinfectant such as a hypochlorite solution (which is readily available and inexpensive). Ensure all surfaces are cleaned prior to using disinfectant. It is recommended that a concentration giving 100 to 200 mg/L of available chlorine is used for at least 5 minutes. Where absolute cleanliness cannot be assured, a concentration giving 1,000 mg/L or more of available chlorine should be used to rinse items.

If you have any questions regarding this advice please contact an environmental health officer on 6264 0300