Coming Home After A Disaster Event

Steps to Stay Safe as You Return Home

Prepare for your return

- Bring the right supplies and drive carefully. Do a home safety inspection and make a cleanup plan.
- Know common cleanup dangers and be aware of other dangers.
- Go home only after authorities say it is safe.
- Call the power and gas company to find out if services are available in your area.
- Let family or friends know you are returning home.
- Make sure you have had a tetanus shot in the past 10 years.

Drive carefully

- Do not drive through floodwaters or over downed power lines.
- Traffic lights may be out, and street signs may be turned or missing.
- Stop at all intersections, and have a full tank of gas.

Bring the right supplies — check them off

- Lots of bottled drinking water and some sports drinks
- Food that does not have to be kept cold
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First-aid kit
- Battery-operated radio
- Waterproof boots or waders
- Safety gear: work gloves, safety goggles, a hard hat and hard-soled boots or shoes
- N-95 face masks (available at hardware stores)
- Camera or video camera to record damage
- Hand tools: hammer, saw, screwdriver, crowbar, crescent wrench, pliers, etc.
- Trash bags and cleaning supplies
- Cell phone
Coming Home

Do a home safety inspection

• Do not enter your house if it is damaged extensively or if you think it may fall down.
• If water surrounds your house, do not enter it.
• Check outside for loose power lines and gas leaks before entering and call the power company if you find any.
• Turn off the power before entering a flooded home or building. Do not turn off the power if you are standing in water.
• Proceed carefully. Floors may be slippery or have holes. Ceilings and tall furniture may fall.
• Open all doors and windows as soon as you enter the structure, then exit the building and do not reenter until it has aired out for 30 minutes.
• Check for broken water pipes.
• Have a reputable contractor inspect your roof.
• Check trees for broken branches and leaning trunks.