

WASTE IN DISASTER

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TOPIC

Natural and man-made disasters such as floods, hurricanes, or warfare that flood the sewer system can cause additional personal and community disasters. You may be unable to flush the toilets or run water for weeks or even months. Failure to properly dispose of human waste can lead to epidemics.

PREPARE

- Know how to turn off the water service valve to your home so no contaminated water can come into your home.
- Have a backup plan for emergency drinking, cooking, and washing water if your supply is cut off. (plan for 1 gallon of water per person per day)
- Have the resources available to dispose of waste
 - Determine what kind of temporary toilet is allowed in your area
 - Obtain materials to build a temporary toilet: garbage bags, buckets, wood chips, porta potty, etc.



A MAKESHIFT TOILET

You can build a makeshift toilet or buy an emergency toilet.

- Get two buckets and label them “pee” or “poo” (or #1 and #2, etc.).
- Set them up in a private space. The seat can be moved from one to the other.
- Try to keep types of waste in their own separate buckets. The pee is the component that produces the bad smell in toilets that mix waste.
- After using the pee bucket remove the seat and cover with a lid that closes well.
- After using the poo bucket, sprinkle about a half cup of the carbon material so that it completely covers the surface of the poo. This will eliminate odors and keep flies away.
- Toilet paper is okay for the poo bucket, but not for the pee bucket.
- Put the toilet seat back down, ensuring it's not airtight. Give your poo some air and it will dry out and reduce in volume.

Buy an emergency toilet:

- There are kits (available online) that include complete toilet packs
- Check the camping section of stores for pre-built toilet options

HOW TO PROPERLY DISPOSE OF WASTE

- Check with your local health authority for proper disposal methods
 - Do not put human waste into normal garbage
 - You may have to store waste until the public sanitary system is fixed
- If you are allowed to bury human waste:
 - Bury human waste in the ground to avoid spreading of disease.
 - Dig a pit 2-3 feet deep and at least 50 feet from any well, spring or water supply.
 - Have dry carbon material to cover the waste, and then cover with dirt to keep out animals and reduce the smell.

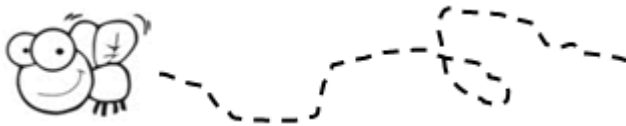


FLIES, PESTS, AND DISEASE

- Danger arises when flies are allowed to land and feed on human feces
- Germs or spores of feces can be carried by the flies to human food and open water sources. Rodents such as mice and rats can also be carriers of spores and pass the spores to humans and pets.
- Improper waste disposal can lead to several health issues including diseases such as cholera, salmonella, and fecal-oral transmission disease, as well as give off and awful odor.

WHAT TO DO AFTER A DISASTER

- Check water and sewer lines in your home to see if they are intact
- Check for leaks around your home, which would indicate a fractured pipe
- Avoid using toilets even if your homes sewer lines are not damaged: your homes pipes might be okay but pipes in the street may be broken
- Check with local officials for how to properly dispose of human waste



MORE INFORMATION

Americanpreppersnetwork.com - Going Poop in a Disaster

Phlush.org - Making a Twin Bucket Toilet

Phlush.org - Why Disaster Sanitation?



If electronic copy (with clickable links) is needed, e-mail your request to Michael.Bamberger@oregonstate.edu.