

# PROTECTING YOUR HOME

## Fighting Flood Damage In Your Home

(NAPSA)—When it's hurricane season, the rough weather can come right into your home. In fact, heavy rains and high winds combined can do tremendous damage anytime of year.

The greatest natural threat to homes in the U.S. is flooding. Even homes outside high-risk areas are still vulnerable; as many as a quarter of all flood insurance claims are outside those areas.

Here are some ways you can minimize flood damage in your home:

- If you can do it safely—from someplace dry—shut off the power.
- Blot or mop up as much water as you can, and wipe your furniture dry.
- Loop the ends of your draperies through a coat hanger and put the hanger on the curtain rod to keep the ends off the wet carpet.
- Open cabinet doors, drawers, luggage and other closed things to facilitate drying.
- Pack damp books tightly to prevent warping of pages. Large quantities of books should be handled by a restoration professional to avoid damage during the drying process.
- Remember, an ordinary vacuum will do little or nothing to help with water or water damage, and using one to get rid of water may even be dangerous. Use a submersible pump or a wet/dry vacuum.



**Water damage starts immediately after a flood and gets worse by the minute.**

- If you can smell mold but not see it, look for it above the ceilings or behind the walls.
  - Don't open your windows if the humidity outside is more than 40 percent; it will only make things worse.
  - Don't hesitate to call in an expert. Because bacterial growth can start almost immediately, a professional response in the first 24 hours makes all the difference.
- You can get everything back to normal fast with some help from the experts at ServiceMaster Clean. Their local service businesses are trained, equipped and ready to restore your home after any disaster, from water in the basement to fire and smoke damage in the kitchen. When the unforeseen happens, call 800-RESPOND or find experts at [www.servicemasterclean.com](http://www.servicemasterclean.com).