



How to prepare for a flood in the workplace

Checklist

Due to climate change, the Island of Montréal is increasingly affected by risks of flooding and snow melt. Rapidly melting snow, precipitations and higher water levels are all factors that contribute to increasing the risks. Many workplaces are located in areas at risk of being affected. Actions are needed to limit damage and protect the health of workers.

What to do **BEFORE** a flood

- Check if your business or offices are located in a risk area by consulting <https://vigilance.geo.msp.gouv.qc.ca/>.
 - Areas where flood risks are higher:
 - near Lac des Deux Montagnes
 - near Rivière-des-Prairies
- Put toxic substances in a safe place (e.g., shelves, closets) to prevent polluting the flooded area.

What to do at the **BEGINNING** of a flood

1. Follow public officials' directives and instructions:
 - On the borough's website
 - On social networks
 - By subscribing to [Notices and alerts](#) and [CodeRed](#) on the official website of your neighbourhood to receive phone, text or email messages.
2. Turn off the main breakers in the electrical panels.
3. Turn off the main water shutoff valves.
4. Call your gas company to turn off the gas supply.
5. Make sure chemical products are stored properly.

What to do **DURING AND AFTER** a flood

Before going into a flooded building:

- Have a qualified professional inspect the building's structure (foundations, roof and other support) to look for signs of weaknesses:
 - Cracks
 - Bulges
 - Crumbling mortar joints
- If needed or in case of doubt, contact a:
 - building engineer
 - post-disaster restoration company
 - company referred by your insurer

➤ **Cleaning and restoration activities**

When you* participate in cleaning and restoration activities, avoid injuries caused by objects as well as any contact with contaminated water:

1- Wear the following personal protective equipment (PPE):

- Long puncture-resistant rubber gloves



- Sealed safety goggles



- Rubber safety boots



- Tyvek® type coveralls



- N95 mask (NIOSH)



- Hard hat, if risk of head injury



2- Wash your hands often.

3- Equipment that runs on gas or propane should **NEVER** be used indoors. There are risks of CO poisoning, even if doors and windows are open.

* Some workers should not participate in cleaning following a flood:

- Pregnant or breastfeeding workers
- Workers with chronic respiratory diseases such as asthma
- Workers with weakened immune systems

➤ **Flood waters**

Flood waters are dirty and contaminated, and can pose health risks.

- If contaminated water or objects touch your mouth or broken skin, rinse these areas with plenty of clean water, then call 811 for information about actions to take.

➤ Prevent mould from growing

After a flood, mould can grow in your facility. Mould releases respirable particles (spores) into the air.

Mould can cause health problems, especially respiratory issues.

It is important to prevent mould from growing to protect your health and the health of your workers. To do so:

- Remove any remaining water as quickly as possible.
- Once water is removed, clean up as quickly as possible, ideally within 48 hours.
- Discard materials that have absorbed water.
- Dry and air out the building.
- Call professional cleaning companies registered with the Régie du bâtiment du Québec (RBQ)

➤ Flood action plan

To better prepare for a flood, it is important to implement an action plan. Here are a few resources that could help you develop your action plan:

- CCOHS: https://www.ccohs.ca/products/posters/longdesc/emerg_prep.html
- WSPS: <https://www.wsps.ca/resource-hub/articles/6-steps-to-climate-proof-your-business-emergency-preparedness-plan-for-federal-employers>

We can help you identify and assess health risks for your workers.

If you need help or if you have any questions, contact us:

- Phone : 514-948-7513
- Email: mado.sat@santepub-mtl.qc.ca

Info-Santé and Info-Social: 811 (physical health problem, anxiety, stress. etc.)