

STORM AND FLOOD RECOVERY

Food and kitchen clean-up

- Check if a boil water alert has been issued for your area and if so strictly observe. Refer to [What to do if a boil water alert is in place](#) for more information.
- Dispose of all food (including frozen) that has come into contact with flood waters. Some canned food may be kept but if the can is dented or damaged it should be thrown away. **If in doubt, throw it out.**
- If power is cut for more than 4 hours, food in fridges will spoil. Freezers will generally not defrost and the food kept inside should not spoil for at least 24 hours if the door has been kept shut.
- Consuming unsafe food may cause serious illness. [NSW Food Authority](#) has more information.
- Dishes, pots and pans that have come into contact with floodwater should be carefully inspected, washed and disinfected before they are used again. Dishes with deep cracks should be thrown away, as they cannot be adequately disinfected.
- Discard any items made of porous material, such as wood, plastic or rubber.
- Wash any remaining items in hot soapy water, using a brush, if necessary, to remove dirt. Equipment that can be taken apart should be cleaned in pieces and then rinsed in clean hot water.
- Do not use a dishwasher that has been exposed to floodwater.
- Cupboards and counters need to be cleaned with hot soapy water and rinsed with a chlorine bleach solution before storing dishes.
- If you have any **refrigerated medications**, especially insulin products, contact your pharmacist before use. Do not take medications that have been in contact with floodwater.

Disinfecting

After washing and rinsing, disinfect items:

- Immerse glass, porcelain, china, and enamelware for 10 minutes in a disinfecting solution. Air-dry dishes. Do not use a towel.
- Disinfect silverware, metal utensils and pots and pans by boiling in water for 10 minutes. Chlorine bleach should not be used in this case because it reacts with many metals and causes them to darken.
- Domestic dishwashers are capable of sanitising all eating and cooking utensils as part of the normal cycle.

How to make disinfectant

To make up a 10-litre bucket (standard size) of disinfectant, put on gloves, fill the bucket with water and then add one of the following:

- 50mls (quarter of a cup) of 4% chlorine (household bleach)
- 8-16mls (dessert spoon) of 12.5% chlorine (liquid pool chlorine)

Always follow safety advice on labels.