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## What to do if flood water is in your building

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Entering a building following a flood, whether it's from a leaking roof or a major flood can be very confronting. If the flooding is part of a major disaster event, it may be some days before you can return to site. It is important to consider the safety of people before anything else.

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### Safety Should be your primary focus

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To determine whether there are any risks to your safety run through the following checklist. If the answer to ANY of these questions is 'Yes', the site is unsafe. Leave the area and DO NOT re-enter until Emergency Services personnel have deemed it safe.

- Are there electrical wires or power points in contact with water?
- Does the water extend beyond your view? Electrical contact may be occurring where you can't see it.
- Is there more than five centimetres of water on the floor?
- Are the passageways blocked or obstructed in any way?
- Is there danger from falling material?
- Do the walls/ceiling appear unstable?

**If it is safe to enter**, the damage checklist and checklist for assessing and stabilising the situation on pages 73-75 of [Be Prepared](#) (available on the Disasters page on the AICCM website) are also good references.

**Please remember** that flood water can contain hazardous materials such as sewage overflow. Always take precautions and never enter water with bare feet or hands.

As well as the obvious damage water does to our sites, trapped water can lead to higher humidity in our spaces. In addition to drying out wet floors, look out for areas where water might be hidden or trapped such as:

- Carpet under felt (lift up carpets and remove any sodden underfelt). Use fans and dehumidifiers to dry out any remaining carpet
- Water pooling under shelving and behind cupboards (particularly if you have compactus units). Use wet and dry vacuum cleaners, sponges, towels and mops to dry these up.
- Defrosting fridges and freezers. If the power is out you may find you have a water build up from defrosting equipment.

Once you have attended to these major water sources you can turn to the collection. AICCM's [After A Flood](#) provides guidance on salvaging collection material and precious belongings after a flood event.