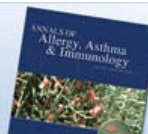


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## Allergists Say Flood Water Can Make Air In Homes Unhealthy

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, Ill. (April 29, 2011) - Homeowners whose houses are flooding with the recent heavy rains should take extra precautions if they suffer from allergies or asthma, say allergists.

During a flood cleanup, indoor air quality in the home may appear to be the least of the problems. However, failure to remove contaminated materials and to reduce moisture and humidity can present serious long-term health risks. Standing water and wet materials quickly lead to, among other things, mold growth, to which many are allergic. The symptoms of mold allergy are very similar to the symptoms of other allergies and asthma, such as sneezing, itching, nasal discharge, congestion and cough and wheezing.

"One of the biggest issues homeowners will face is what to do about flooded carpeting," said allergist James L. Sublett, MD, chair of the indoor environments committee for the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI). "The pads cannot be dried out and should be thrown away. Carpets should be pulled up and thoroughly dried within the first 24 hours. In addition, wall board damage will be hidden and if it has become wet, it should be replaced to above the water line."

The Environmental Protection Agency recommends wearing an N-95 respirator mask while cleaning, in addition to goggles, gloves, long pants, long-sleeved shirts and boots or work shoes. Anything that was wet but cannot be cleaned should be thrown away. They also remind everyone to use place portable generators outside and far away from homes in order to avoid breathing in the carbon dioxide.

### About ACAAI

The ACAAI is a professional medical organization headquartered in Arlington Heights, Ill., that promotes excellence in the practice of the subspecialty of allergy and immunology. The College, comprising more than 5,000 allergists-immunologists and related health care professionals, fosters a culture of collaboration and congeniality in which its members work together and with others toward the common goals of patient care, education, advocacy and research.

To learn more about allergies and asthma, take a relief test and find an allergist, visit [www.AllergyAndAsthmaRelief.org](http://www.AllergyAndAsthmaRelief.org)

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