

## News Release

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### **Paul Davis Restoration offers tips during hurricane season**

**Philadelphia, PA** - Paul Davis Restoration recommends the following storm damage information for property owners as a public service for those who have suffered water-related losses due to storm damage such as heavy rains, hurricanes and tornados. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) the Atlantic hurricane season runs from June until November.

According to Helane Goldstein, Paul Davis Restoration owner in Philadelphia, there are many variables involved in deciding about appropriate restoration steps for water-related storm damage to residential or light commercial structures. However, for recommendations regarding restoration of major commercial properties and building assemblies, Goldstein recommends that property owners consult with professionals who have specific training and experience in this area.

“Whether insured or not, it is important for property owners to document damage with photographs or video, and immediately, to begin loss mitigation procedures themselves; or hire a qualified contractor to do this on their behalf,” said Goldstein. “It is totally inappropriate to put off emergency mitigation while waiting for an insurance claims representative to arrive on the scene to evaluate the loss. By that time, in all probability sufficient time will have passed to grow and amplify microorganisms, which may not be covered by insurance,” she said.

According to the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC), loss mitigation is defined by insurance policies as “reasonable and prudent measures designed to preserve, protect and secure property from further damage” including microbial growth and intensification. The IICRC has outlined three categories of water quality that may cause damage in buildings.

For example, “Category 1 Water” is clean at the source and does not pose a hazard if consumed by humans. However, this water may become quickly contaminated as it mixes with soils on or within floor coverings or parts of the building including walls, decking and subflooring. Time and temperature can promote the growth of microorganisms can cause the water to degrade such as burst water pipes, ruptured lines on appliances and falling rainwater. “Category 2 Water” has some degree of contamination and could cause sickness or discomfort if consumed by humans. Time and temperature can cause this water to become progressively more contaminated. And finally, “Category 3 Water” is highly contaminated and could cause death or serious illness if consumed by humans such as sewage, rising flood waters from rivers, creeks and streams, and ground surface water flowing into homes.

Goldstein cautions that water can also enter a building as a result of wind storm damage. The first involves falling or windblown rainwater that enters a structure as a result of damage to roof components or wall assemblies. The second involves horizontally traveling ground surface water containing silt and soil contaminants that seep into structures through doors or around foundation walls. For example, as ground surface water or storm surge accumulates to a depth of several inches or several feet this is when structures

may become partially submerged or remain substantially flooded for weeks. Then, more elaborate procedures are usually required.

“Fungus, mold and bacteria typically require specific conditions for germination and growth to appear in the structure. They generally include an organic food source like paper or wood which are found in abundance in construction materials,” said Goldstein. “Proven measures which can be implemented to control or minimize these conditions will prolong the time required for microbial growth,” she said.

With the above background information in mind, Goldstein recommends emergency mitigation with safety first as the foremost consideration. “Inspect for structural integrity and ventilation with fresh moving air will discourage the growth microorganisms. Plus, check for shock hazards by turning off the supply of electricity such as circuit breakers to damaged areas. Also, anticipate that electricity may be restored suddenly without notice,” said Goldstein. “However, most importantly when in doubt for your safety, obtain an evaluation by a licensed and qualified builder or structural engineer before entering,” said Goldstein.

Goldstein advises to always be prepared by wearing personal protective equipment like protective clothing, boots with steel or fiberglass shanks, and a hard hat. Protect yourself from injury or exposure to microorganisms by wearing protective gloves before handling contaminated materials. Splash goggles are highly recommended to protect and prevent microorganism entry through the eyes. An organic vapor respirator like a paint respirator can prevent inhalation of most microorganisms or spores. Carefully clean all tools with appropriate detergents after use.

Goldstein, along with the IICRC, recommends contacting a professional water restoration contractor who has specialized water-detection equipment and may be available to assist in this determination. The contractor can help to identify the source of water and extent of wetting and act accordingly which will depend on the category of water that has entered the structure.

Immediate actions such as removing unsalvageable or wet materials, looking for evidence of moisture wicking up insulation materials and more procedures that could save the structure may require the assistance of a professional water damage restoration company that has trained technicians, specialized cleaners, biocides, extraction, drying and dehumidifying equipment, and moisture measuring and monitoring instruments. A certified professional can be located by contacting Paul Davis Restoration which employs only certified technicians with IICRC.

“Property owners expect immediate response in their time of need, but few insurance companies are able to have an adjuster on site in one to two hours from the time the loss is reported. Often, several days elapse. During this delay, the property owner is highly vulnerable to bad advice from uninformed neighbors, public adjusters, unscrupulous contractors, and others with their own agendas,” said Goldstein.

“Ethical restoration specialists put to rest many unreasonable fears and help the insured property owner adjust quickly to the reality of the situation,” she said. “Talk to a professional in the restoration and emergency mitigation service industry before you wait too long after the damage has occurred.”

For further information and assistance please check [www.pdrdelawarevalley.com](http://www.pdrdelawarevalley.com) or call 877-634-3641

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