Water Intrusion Response and Remediation Guide

Version	Date	Comments
1	January, 2014	Initial *Water Intrusion Response and Remediation Guide*

A. INTRODUCTION

This document is meant to give general direction for response to water intrusions. This document should be used as a guide; it is not an all-inclusive document. The Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHS) should be contacted if assistance is needed or if you are not comfortable responding to the situation. EHS may also assist by using moisture detecting equipment to determine the extent of the water intrusion. The *Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings* document by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was used to develop this guide.

B. SCOPE

Each situation is unique and should be evaluated independently to determine proper corrective action. If staff are not comfortable responding or remediating a water intrusion they should contact the Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHS). In the event of a large water intrusion or water intrusions involving sewage EHS should be contacted and a third party contractor may be required to assist with remediation.

C. WATER INTRUSION RESPONSE

- Immediately turn off water source or capture water with trash can or bucket to prevent further damage.
- Contact Facilities Management at (703) 993-2525 to report the water intrusion so a source can be identified.
- Follow recommendations listed in Table 1, once water source has been fixed or contained.
- Always repair leaks or contain water source before replacing damaged materials. (Ex: pipe leak, rainwater, roof leak, drain overflow, humidity)
- Materials must be dried within 24-48 hours to prevent microbial growth.
- Contact EHS as necessary at (703) 993-8448.
- If the water intrusion is due to sewage, see Section D “Sewage or Otherwise Contaminated Water Intrusion”.

Table 1: Remediation Action – Response for Water Intrusions *All items should be dried within 24-48 hours. Steps for drying are listed below. Contact EHS to assess items to verify they have been dried.	
Material	**Action**
Ceiling tile	• Dispose of and replace if tiles are sagging or discolored.
Dry wall	• Intact drywall should be dried in place if there is no obvious swelling and the structure is intact • To dry, remove cove base and place holes in the drywall along the bottom of the wall • Place fans in front of walls to ventilate the wall cavity • If swelling or obvious water damage is visible dispose of and replace • Accelerate drying process with dehumidifiers
Cove base	• Remove peeling cove base and replace ***Note:*** *This may indicate the wall is wet behind the cove base (see "drywall" action before replacing cove base)*
Wood	• Remove water with extraction vacuum • Use dehumidifiers and/or fans to accelerate drying • Remove any items which might block air flow to wood, which may include removing wood to allow it to dry
Concrete or cinder block surfaces	• Remove water with extraction vacuum • Accelerate drying process with dehumidifiers, fans, and/or heaters
Furniture, curtains, other fabrics	• Remove water with water extraction vacuum • Accelerate drying process with dehumidifiers and/or fans • Do not launder until item has completely dried (exception: curtains may be laundered according to manufacturer's instructions) • For important pieces consider consulting a restoration/water damage professional
Carpet and matting	• Remove water with an extraction vacuum • Use dehumidifiers and/or fans to accelerate drying • HEPA vacuum dried surface • ***DO NOT*** *rinse carpet until it has completely dried. This includes antimicrobial rinse and vacuum solutions.*
Cellulose insulation	• Dispose of and replace
Fiberglass insulation	• Dispose of and replace
Tile, linoleum, or other hard, non-porous surfaces	• Remove water with water extraction vacuum • If under flooring is not dry remove flooring if necessary and dry under flooring • For cleaning, vacuum or damp wipe with water and a mild detergent and allow to dry; scrub if necessary

D. SEWAGE OR OTHERWISE CONTAMINATED WATER INTRUSION RESPONSE

- Notify EHS at (703) 993-8448 immediately.
- Seek assistance from remediation / water damage professional. This can be coordinated through Facilities at (703) 993-2525 (Note: some departments may coordinate directly with a remediation / water damage professional).
- George Mason University staff should not assist with clean up without assistance from a remediation / water damage professional as potential contamination can cause a health hazard if not handled properly.

E. WATER DAMAGE NOT DRY WITHIN 48 HOURS PRIOR OR VISIBLE POTENTIAL MICROBIAL GROWTH IS VISIBLE

- Notify EHS at (703) 993-8448 immediately.
- Disinfect using an anti-microbial cleaner like Odoban®. **Note: all anti-microbial solutions may not be acceptable for all surfaces. Always check to make sure the solution selected is suitable for the material being disinfected.
- The minimum PPE required to be worn by personnel remediating or decontaminating potential microbial growth includes an N95 respirator, eye protection, and gloves.
- Have owners dispose of items that they deem nonessential.
- Small scale remediation may be done by George Mason University employees. A small remediation of microbial growth is the remediation of an area with visible growth on less than 10 square feet of building materials.
- Larger areas must be remediated by a remediation / water damage professional. EHS must be notified when remediation by a third party professional is being done.

Table 2: Remediation Action – Response for Visible Potential Microbial Growth		
Material	**Discard**	**Cleaning Method**
Ceiling tile	Yes	NA
Dry wall	Yes	NA
Cove base	No	Wipe clean with a single use towel.
Wood	Only if structural integrity compromised	Saturate area with anti-microbial solution (Odoban®) and allow to sit 20 minutes. Spray area again and wipe area with single use towel. (flooring use wood floor cleaner)
Concrete or cinder block surfaces	No	Saturate area with anti-microbial solution (Odoban®) and allow to sit for 20 minutes. Spray area again and wipe area with single use towel.
Furniture, curtains, other fabrics	If items cannot or will not be cleaned	For important items consult a remediation/ water damage specialist
Carpet and matting	Yes	NA
Cellulose insulation	Yes	NA
Fiberglass insulation	Yes	NA
Tile, linoleum, or other hard, non-porous surfaces	No	Saturate area with anti-microbial solution (Odoban®) and allow to sit for 20 minutes. Spray area again and wipe area with singe use towel.