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# How to Salvage Flood-Damaged Appliances

## Disaster Recovery

## Equipment and Appliances: Repair or Replace?

Deciding to repair or replace gas and electrical appliances damaged by dirty floodwaters can be a difficult decision. Deciding to salvage or replace damaged equipment will be influenced by the length of time in the water, the level of the flooding and the amount of coverage allowed by the insurance and flood-relief programs.

**Some things you need to consider are:**

- Warranty -- Repairing the equipment or appliance may void the warranty.
- Reliability -- Dirty floodwater can cause parts to corrode, causing break downs.
- Age of the equipment/appliance -- New equipment/appliances offer better energy efficiency, thus saving money on monthly energy costs.
- Insurance coverage -- Allowances offered by the insurance adjuster.
- Safety -- Corrosion or clogged parts not replaced can cause fire, explosion or electrical shock.
- Cost -- Extensive repairs for parts and labor may cost more than buying new.

### **IMPORTANT!!!**

Any work done on electric or gas appliances and equipment should be done by a qualified, licensed contractor, not by a do-it-yourselfer, no matter how skilled.

## Equipment

- Have a professional check for signs that the oil tank moved. Even buried ones can float when flooded.
- Have a professional check metal or brick chimney for cracks, dirt, debris and leaks. These problems can cause fires or carbon monoxide poisoning when the furnace is turned on.
- Manufacturers usually recommend that all motors, electrical components, safety controls and (for gas equipment) gas valves be replaced.
- Controls on water heaters, furnaces, boilers, room heaters and conditioners will become clogged when flooded in contaminated water.
- Defective gas or oil control devices can cause a fire, flashback or explosion.
- Defective controls on electrical equipment can cause a powerful shock, causing injury or death.
- Flooded water heaters (gas and electric) should be replaced.
- Any HVAC duct insulation that was in contact with floodwaters should be replaced.
- Ductwork with wet insulation should be taken apart, cleaned, dried and disinfected.
- Any HVAC ductwork in the crawl space of a flooded home should be replaced.
- Split system heat pumps should be replaced if one or both of units moved with the flood.

## Appliances

- Call an appliance technician to check your appliances.
- Manufacturers usually recommend that all motors, electrical components, safety controls, and (for gas appliances) gas valves be replaced.
- Refrigerators and freezers with wet insulation cannot be salvaged.
- If there were only a few inches of water in the house, refrigerators and freezers are probably fine.
- Ovens and ranges are usually salvageable. Wet controls should be replaced.
- Have an appliance technician check and replace the pilot orifice and any valves on gas ranges that were in contact with floodwaters.
- Have an appliance technician or electrician check all electrical contacts and connections on the washer and dryer and replace if wet.

Call the customer service of the manufacturer who is on your major appliance (many 800 numbers below). They can give you advice or possibly financial help before you attempt to plug in the appliance.

Make the decision on replacing or repairing based on what feels right to you. Your safety and your life may depend on it.

The Gas Appliance Manufacturers Association recommends that all flood-damaged plumbing, heating, cooling and electrical appliances and related systems should be replaced rather than repaired. It also strongly recommends that all work on flooded equipment be done by a qualified, licensed contractor.

## Customer Service Numbers for Most Manufacturers

## **Appliances**

Amana 866-616-2664  
Bosch 800-944-2904  
Creda 800-800-2733  
Dacor 800-793-0093  
Five Star 800-553-7704  
Franklin 877-261-9867  
Frigidaire 800-374-4432  
Gaggenau 877-424-3628  
GE 800-626-2005  
GE Monogram 800-444-1845  
Hamilton Beach 800-851-8900  
Hotpoint (GE) 800-626-2005  
In-Sink-Erator 800-558-5700  
JennAir 800-536-6247  
Kenmore 800-469-4663  
KitchenAid 800-334-6889  
LG 800-243-0000  
Magic Chef 800-688-1120  
Maytag 866-616-2601  
Panasonic 800-211-7262  
RCA 877-794-7977  
Sears 800-469-4663  
Sharp Microwave 800-237-4277  
Subzero 800-222-7820  
Tappan (see Frigidaire)  
Thermador 800-656-9226  
Viking 888-845-4641  
Whirlpool 866-698-2538

## **Electronics**

DIRECTV 800-494-4388 or TTY 800-779-4388  
GE 800-447-1700  
Hitachi 800-448-2244  
JVC 800-252-5722  
Mitsubishi 800-332-2119  
Pioneer 800-421-1404  
RCA 877-794-7977  
Sony 800-222-7669  
Toshiba 800-631-3811  
Zenith 877-993-6484

# Additional Information

*How to Salvage Flood-Damaged Appliances*, Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service, Kansas State University.

*Safety Issues, Cleaning and Restoration of Flood Damaged Retail Food Facilities*, Orange County Health Care Agency, Orange County Environmental Health.

[\*Experts Warn that Flood-Damaged Appliances Should Be Replaced\*](#)

[Retrofitting Flooded Homes](#), Home Energy Magazine.

[Repairing Your Flooded Home](#), American Red Cross, FEMA.

All flooded gas plumbing, heating, cooling equipment, and electrical appliances should be replaced rather than repaired.

## For More Information

For more information on disaster preparedness and recovery visit the [NC Disaster Information Center](#).

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