

Case Study - Re-occupancy Standards for Sewage Spill

Project Description: Main Sewer Breach, Residential Remediation

Scope of Services: AET was contracted to provide professional representation to a Pennsylvania Township following a main sewer back flow which flooded the basements of 20 residential properties. This high profile sewage spill was extensively covered by the local news media. AET's CIH staff professional assessed the damage and developed a comprehensive scope of work for each residence. Remediation was performed by a local restoration contractor and AET was tasked to develop and verify project completion based on strict re-occupancy standards.

AET Experience: Steps to remove sewage contamination include-water sludge extraction, material disposal, flushing with a mixture of clean water and detergent solution, HEPA vacuuming, dehumidification and disinfection. Where incomplete/inadequate cleaning or disinfection is performed, disease-causing residues can remain. These residues can be invisible to the naked eye and diseases can be transmitted to building occupants from hand to mouth contact, aerosolization and inhalation of these pathogens (including endotoxins) as well as tracking of these contaminants to other parts of the structure. Strict visual inspection criteria including surface sampling for biological residues is essential to ensure the building is safe for re-occupancy.

Re-occupancy Standards include:

1. No dirt, debris or visible surface contamination is present upon final visual inspection.
2. Moisture testing of the remaining building materials indicate surfaces are dry.
3. No detectable concentrations of pathogens (E.coli, Fecal Streptococcus, Total Coliform, and Fecal Coliform) are found during swab sampling of representative building surfaces (floors, walls, stairs, etc.) and pathways.

When you need professional help or advice, email Alan Sutherland, CIH, CHMM at a.sutherland@aetinc.biz or call 610-891-0114. We provide nationwide services; phone consultations are free. Check out the full range of environmental contracting/consulting services we provide at our website www.aetinc.biz.