



## **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 electrician check all electrical contacts and connections on the washer and dryer and replace if wet.

Call the customer service of the manufacturers whose is on your major appliances (many 800 numbers are on the next page). 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	1-866-616-2664	Magic Chef	1-800-688-1120
Bosch	1-800-944-2904	Maytag	1-866-616-2601
Creda	1-800-800-2733	Panasonic	1-800-211-7262
Dacor	1-800-793-0093	RCA	1-877-794-7977
		Sears	1-800-469-4663
Five Star	1-800-553-7704	Sharp Microwave	1-800-237-4277
Franklin	1-877-261-9867	Subzero	1-800-222-7820
Frigidaire	1-800-374-4432	Tappan	(see Frigidaire)
Gaggenau	1-877-424-3628	Thermador	1-800-656-9226
GE	1-800-626-2005	Viking	1-888-845-4641
GE Monogram	1-800-444-1845	Whirlpool	1-866-698-2538
Hamilton Beach	1-800-851-8900	LG	1-800-243-0000
Hotpoint (GE)	1-800-626-2005		
In-Sink-Erator	1-800-558-5700		
JennAir	1-800-536-6247		
Kenmore	1-800-469-4663		
KitchenAid	1-800-334-6889		

**Electronics:**

GE	1-800-447-1700	RCA	1-877-794-7977
Hitachi	1-800-448-2244	Sony	1-800-222-7669
JVC	1-800-252-5722	Toshiba	1-800-631-3811
Mitsubishi	1-800-332-2119	Zenith	1-877-993-6484
Pioneer	1-800-421-1404	DIRECTV	1-800-494-4388 or TTY-1-800-779-4388

Written by: Wilma S. Hammett, PhD, Professor Emeritus, NC State University

From:

*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, [www.ocfoodinfo.com/flood.htm](http://www.ocfoodinfo.com/flood.htm)

*Experts Warn that Flood-Damaged Appliances should be Replaced*, [www.aluminumwirerepair.com/webapp/GetPage?pid=89](http://www.aluminumwirerepair.com/webapp/GetPage?pid=89)

*Customer Service Numbers*, NC Cooperative Extension, NC State University,  
[www.ces.ncsu.edu/disaster/factsheets/html/92.html](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/disaster/factsheets/html/92.html)

*Retrofitting Flooded Homes*, National Affordable Housing Network,  
[www.homeenergy.org/archive/hem.dis.anl.gov/eehem/95/950108.html](http://www.homeenergy.org/archive/hem.dis.anl.gov/eehem/95/950108.html)

*Repairing Your Flooded Home*, American Red Cross, FEMA,  
[http://www.redcross.org/static/file\\_cont333\\_lang0\\_150.pdf](http://www.redcross.org/static/file_cont333_lang0_150.pdf)

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