Cleaning and Disinfecting After a Flood

Follow these simple rules for cleaning and disinfecting items after flooding:

1. Make sure the item is in good repair. Items that have been torn, splintered, cracked, broken, dented, etc. should be discarded and replaced.

2. To clean small items soaked by flood waters that are porous (will absorb water) such as bedding, clothing, stuffed animals, etc.
   - Pre-soak items in cold water before machine washing to remove mud and filth. DO NOT pre-soak in your washer as it may cause damage. Curtains, blankets, accent rugs and other large items can be hung on a line and hosed down to remove mud and filth.
   - Use hot water and detergent when washing items. Be careful not to overload the washing machine.
   - Add 1 cup of liquid chlorine bleach to wash water before adding clothes or other items, use ½ cup bleach for front loading washers.
   - Tumble dry in a dryer or hang items to dry in the sun.

3. Large items that are porous such as patio upholstered furniture, mattresses wall to wall carpeting, etc., that have been soaked by flood waters MUST be discarded.

4. To clean items that are solid (will not absorb water) such as a concrete, tile or vinyl flooring, plastic patio furniture, plastic toys, picture frames, etc. use a mild household detergent solution to clean the item.

5. Prepare a bleach solution following the manufacturer’s label instructions for disinfecting. To disinfect solid items (after cleaning), make a mild bleach and water solution, use the solution in one of these ways:
   - Immerse small objects in the bleach/water solution for one minute. Remove from the solution and allow to air dry.
   - Spritz/spray the bleach/water solution on the item until thoroughly wet and allow to air dry.
   - Use a cloth dipped in the bleach/water solution to completely wipe the item down and allow to air dry.

If in DOUBT, throw it OUT!