

Guidelines for working on flood damaged premises

When quoting on and performing repair work on flood damaged buildings, we recommend you follow this checklist. Following these guidelines will not only help ensure the safety of yourself, your workers and home owners, but also allow you to more accurately quote on the work required to repair/re-build.

Checklist item	Check
<p>1. The first priorities in flood repair situations are power and plumbing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before power is returned, you should engage an electrician to assess/test any electrical including powerpoints and switches, external air conditioner units, hot water systems, stoves, hot plates, dishwashers, garbage disposals, meter box and switchboard components, phone/computer lines, swimming pool pump motors and light fittings (in case of extreme inundation). • A licensed plumber should then ensure the sewerage system is working satisfactorily. Once these two major items are addressed and in working order, other repairs can commence. <p><i>IMPORTANT NOTE: Ensure you have a suitable first aid kit on site when performing inspections and any work, as working in flood conditions can be hazardous.</i></p>	
2. Photograph and record the condition of the damaged building work before undertaking any repairs.	
3. Remove all mud, dirt and silt prior to rectification.	
<p>4. Specific areas of the home to be inspected include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wall sheeting/plasterboard/other wall sheeting (E.g. in older houses, fibrous plaster and hardboard) – these will need to be assessed on an individual basis. The best option is to reinstate all water damaged sheeting. <p><i>NOTE: Attempts to re-finish water damaged linings should be stated as a Provisional Sum.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wet area sheeting – this may not need replacing (villaboard/fibro), however the wall behind could require drying out. <p><i>NOTE: This may only be adequately assessed with inspection openings or when part demolition is completed to allow inspection of wall sheeting. If all of the internal sheeting has been removed, contractors should consider installing temporary bracing to ensure structural integrity of the building. Any doubts regarding the structure should be referred to an engineer for approval.</i></p> <p><i>WARNING: Be mindful of building products containing asbestos. Removal of more than 10m² of bonded asbestos (four standard wall sheets of fibro) requires a “B” Class Asbestos Removal licence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skirting, architraves (especially if any of this is craft wood) – must be removed to replace sheeting. Make allowances to utilise new joinery. <p><i>NOTE: The true affects of water damage will not be apparent until several weeks after the immersion. Any material that is allowed to remain as part of the structure needs suitable time to dry out. Special attention should be given to timber reveals on aluminium doors and windows.</i></p>	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wardrobe doors and shelving – check if these are functional and in good condition or need replacing. • Kitchen cupboards, vanity units and laundry units – determine if granite tops and sinks can be reused. <i>NOTE: Any item in good condition that is attached to a water damaged item may not necessarily be reused. Attempting to dismantle or part demolish an item is likely to cause problems. Allow a Provisional Sum if uncertain. Salvaging components should be assessed on an individual, case by case basis.</i> • Timber floors – do they need replacing? (Timber overlay floors will need replacing). <i>NOTE: If there is a problem, the structure will need to be dried out with fans. It is unlikely that a timber platform floor or an overlay floor on a concrete slab will return to a suitable finish. Allow a Provisional Sum if uncertain.</i> • Blanket/bulk insulation – this can hold water and may need to be replaced. • Bathrooms – you should check tiles and water proofing. • Concrete paths and driveways – are they undermined (problems may not be apparent at the time of quoting). • Painting – for paint to be applied (generally) the surface/substrate must be dry and clear of debris. <i>NOTE: When water has been trapped in an enclosed space with six to ten weeks of warm weather remaining, it is likely that mould will develop and cause a lingering odour. Allow sufficient time for the works to dry adequately before reinstating finishes.</i> • Termite barriers – water logged termite barriers will be ineffective and require total reinstatement or recharging. • Floor tiles – these will require careful inspection. Rubber-based adhesives are likely to fail if inundated with water. Porous grouting exposed to black water under the tiles will probably need replacement. (Each home will need separate inspection). • Trapped water – you should also check for trapped water under kitchen cupboards, baths, stair wells, laundry tubs and vanities, as well as under the house (if it has a space) – trapped water has the potential to cause problems to timber floors. 	
5. Building approvals – some building works may require building approval. Check with a building certifier.	
6. Do not perform any building work without a written contract in place. See the section on contracts for more information.	
7. If you are performing work outside your usual area, ensure you have appropriate accommodation organised prior to arriving. Accommodation during flood disaster times can be difficult to come by.	

NOTE: When performing repair work on flood damaged properties, Master Builders strongly recommends you carry out an individual inspection on each site to properly determine the extent of the damage. Rectification costs must consider any future failures or defects that may arise later as a result of water inundation.



Interim measures

As everyone can appreciate, people need to get back into their homes as soon as possible. Some temporary measures that can be used to assist home owners are:

1. Check if power can be reinstated to part of the house (use a qualified electrician).
2. Assess if a temporary kitchen bench can be installed while waiting for a new kitchen (which could be some months).
3. For homes with multiple bathrooms, check if one bathroom can be put back into service with priority, while waiting for the remaining bathroom/s to be rebuilt.

Contracts

You should not perform any work until a written contract is in place that accurately reflects the scope of work to be completed. Due to the need to process repairs as quickly as possible, it may be necessary to waive the Cooling Off Period required under Part 6 of the *Domestic Building Contracts Act 2000* (DBCA).

For this reason, a standard regulated contract from Master Builders may be amended to operate as a repair contract under Section 15 of the DBCA. The owner must provide a Waiver Notice (included with this fact sheet) to the builder for the repair contract to comply with the legislation and allow the waiver of a Cooling Off Period before commencing works.

You should prepare these kinds of contracts as follows:

RBC-1 – Residential Building Contract – insert the following words into Part J of the contract:

“SC1 This is a Repair Contract in accordance with Section 15 of the *Domestic Building Contracts Act 2000*. The Owner is to provide a Waiver Notice to the Building Contractor in accordance with Section 78 of the *Domestic Building Contracts Act 2000*.”

MWC-1 Minor Works Contract and TC-H Trade Contract Housing – insert the following into Item 15 Special Conditions of the contract:

“SC1 This is a Repair Contract in accordance with Section 15 of the *Domestic Building Contracts Act 2000*. The Owner is to provide a Waiver Notice to the Building Contractor in accordance with Section 78 of the *Domestic Building Contracts Act 2000*.”

All contracts between principal contractors and subcontractors should be in accordance with Part 4A of the *Queensland Building Services Authority Act 1991*.

All contracts between building contractors and building owners of commercial works may use the Master Builders commercial contract documents.

Master Builders can offer guidance and assistance when preparing contracts. Contact your local regional office or call Master Builders Legal & Contracts team on (07) 3225 6419 for further assistance.

Useful links and information

The Building Services Authority (BSA) has developed a specific disaster recovery website to provide information to contractors and consumers in flood affected areas. The site includes specific information for contractors and consumers.

For contractors, you can download a cleaning checklist, Guide to Restoring a House after a Flood, health and safety checklist and other useful information. The site can also help you answer questions from clients or potential clients. It covers a variety of issues from rebuilding after a flood to the insurance claims process.

Visit the site at www.bsadisasterrecovery.qld.gov.au.



**WAIVER NOTICE
UNDER A REPAIR CONTRACT**

Pursuant to the Building Contract dated _____ between
_____, (hereinafter referred to as "the Owner") and
_____, (hereinafter referred to as "the Builder")

Under Section 78 of the *Domestic Building Contracts Act 2000*, the Owner states that the building Owner waives the building Owner's right to withdraw from this contract.

Date this _____ day of _____ 20 _____

SIGNED BY The Owner _____)

WITNESS BY _____)

Name

