

Electrical Safety after a Disaster

General



Serious injury can result for anyone dealing with the aftermath of a major storm, tornado, or other disaster, so it's wise to be overly cautious.

Tips

- Beware of outdoor hazards. Watch out for loose or dangling power lines, and report them immediately to proper authorities. It is not unusual in a disaster such as this for more people to be killed by carelessness in the aftermath than were killed by the event itself.
- Be sure all electric and gas services are turned off before entering buildings for the first time.
- Disconnect main switch and all circuits.
- Remove covers from all outlets and fuses or multibreaker boxes and flush with clean water. Let dry and spray with contact cleaner/lubricant.
- Watch for electrical shorts or live wires. Don't turn on any lights or appliances until an electrician has checked the system for short circuits.
- Electric motors in appliances that have been flooded should be thoroughly cleaned and reconditioned before they are put back into service.

Based on information developed by Clemson Cooperative Extension following Hurricane Hugo. Revised for Virginia audiences by Virginia Cooperative Extension.

For more information, contact your local office of Virginia Cooperative Extension.

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