

DUST IN YOUR HOME/BUSINESS

Removing It and Reducing Your Exposure

Dust created from the collapse of the World Trade Center and surrounding buildings has found its way into homes and businesses throughout the region. Scientists have NOT proven whether this dust is or is not dangerous, but believe that caution should be used when cleaning your home/business to safely remove the dust.

Remember dust may be present on a surface even if you can not see it. *While somewhat costly, homes or businesses with excessive dust should seriously consider hiring a professional cleaning service.*

If you attempt to do your own cleaning, please follow the safety steps outlined below.

When cleaning, be sure to:

- ◆ Wear a dust mask and gloves. *Remember: Breathing in dust under normal conditions is not good for your lungs.*
- ◆ Wear old clothes and when finished be sure to wash them twice.
- ◆ Do not let children, the elderly or people with pre-existing health conditions (such as dust allergies, asthma or other respiratory illnesses) in your home/business while you are removing the dust.
- ◆ Clean everything in your home/business even if you do not see signs of dust. *Dust is made up of fine particles that can get into cracks and crevices.*

Click on the links below to learn the safe cleaning methods for each type of surface.

CARPET, RUGS and UPHOLSTERY

FLOORS

FOOD

HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM

LINENS and CLOTHES

OTHER HARD SURFACES

TOYS

CARPET, RUGS and UPHOLSTERY

- DO NOT USE traditional vacuums or carpet sweepers. These cleaners are designed to pick up large pieces of dust and dirt. They will not collect the fine particles found in dust.
- If sofas, chairs, etc., have removable covers, wash them as recommended by the manufacturer.

CLEANING METHOD:

Step #1: WEAR a dust mask and gloves.

Step #2: SHAMPOO with a steam cleaner. *Be sure to continually change the water.*

Step #3: If you own or can rent/purchase a HEPA vacuum: When dry, VACUUM with HEPA vacuum.

If you don't own or can not purchase a HEPA vacuum: When dry, SHAMPOO again with less cleaning solution. *Be sure to continually change the water.*

FLOORS

- DO NOT SWEEP SURFACES. Sweeping will cause the dust to become airborne, settling once again on floors and other surfaces, which may then be breathed in.
- Floors include tile, linoleum or hardwood floors.

CLEANING METHOD:

- Step #1: WEAR a dust mask and gloves.
- Step #2: MOP or spray a cleaner appropriate for the surface onto a mop or rag to clean the floors. *Be sure to continually rinse your mop or rag. If using a bucket, do not rinse your mop or rag in the cleaning solution; either rinse in a separate bucket or a sink.*
- Step #3: When dry, WIPE your floors with an electrostatic sweeper, such as a Grab-It or a Swiffer.

FOOD

- If possible, throw out any food items that were directly exposed to dust (i.e., fruit left out on tables or counters, dog or cat food left in bowls).
- Food items that were in sealed containers, i.e., jars, boxes, and not directly exposed to dust are fine. *Be sure to follow the steps below for the outside of the sealed containers.*

CLEANING METHOD:

- Step #1: WEAR a dust mask and gloves.
- Step #2: WET WIPE the outside of all the containers using water or a cleaner appropriate for the surface. *Be sure to continually rinse your cloth/rag. If using a bucket, do not rinse your cloth/rag in the cleaning solution; either rinse in a separate bucket or a sink.*
- Step #3: When dry, WIPE the surface with an electrostatic cloth, such as a Grab-It or a Swiffer.

HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM

- Do not turn on your heating or air conditioning system until all of the ducts and filters have been cleaned. Using these systems before cleaning will cause the dust to become airborne, settling once again on floors and other surfaces, which may then be breathed in.
- Check with your building owner or supervisor to be sure that the entire heating and air conditioning system, including ducts and filters, have been cleaned professionally.

CLEANING METHOD FOR DUCTS:

- Duct cleaning should be completed by a professional.

CLEANING METHOD FOR FILTERS ONLY:

- Step #1: WEAR a dust mask and gloves.
- Step #2: REMOVE the old filter carefully; try not to disturb the dust.
- Step #3: REPLACE the filter if it is disposable, and try not to disturb the dust. Or CLEAN the filter, if it is designed to be reused, using water or a cleaner appropriate for the filter.
- Step #4: If you cleaned your filter: When dry, WIPE your filter with an electrostatic cloth, such as a Grab-It or a Swiffer.

LINENS and CLOTHES

- **DO NOT SHAKE YOUR LINENS OR CLOTHES.** Shaking will cause the dust to become airborne, settling once again on floors and other surfaces, which may then be breathed in.

CLEANING METHOD:

- Step #1: WEAR a dust mask and gloves.
- Step #2: CAREFULLY REMOVE the linens and clothes from drawers or closets. Try not to disturb the dust.
- Step #3: WASH all items as specified by the manufacturer. *You may want to wash everything twice before wearing or using.*

OTHER HARD SURFACES

- **DO NOT DUST SURFACES WITH A DRY CLOTH/RAG-USE A WET WIPE.** Dusting with a dry cloth will cause the dust to become airborne, settling once again on floors and other surfaces, which may then be breathed in.
- Hard surfaces include tables, window blinds, shelving, lamps, walls, bathroom and kitchen counters, picture frames, dishes, pots and pans -- any surface that would traditionally collect dust.
- Pay special attention to places where food is prepared.

CLEANING METHOD:

- Step #1: WEAR a dust mask and gloves.
- Step #2: WET WIPE all surfaces using water or a cleaner appropriate for the surface. *Be sure to continually rinse your cloth/rag. If using a bucket, do not rinse your cloth/rag in the cleaning solution; either rinse in a separate bucket or a sink.*
- Step #3: When dry, WIPE your surface with an electrostatic cloth, such as a Grab-It or a Swiffer.

TOYS

- **CLEAN ALL OF YOUR CHILDREN'S TOYS BEFORE THEY PLAY WITH THEM.** This is especially important for toys that may be put into mouths.

CLEANING METHOD:

- Step #1: WEAR a dust mask and gloves.
- Step #2: CAREFULLY COLLECT all of the toys. Try not to disturb the dust.
- Step #3: RUN soft toys, such as stuffed animals, in the dryer to remove dust particles. *Be sure to clean out your dryer's dust guard.*
- Step #4: WASH all plastic and other hard toys with water to remove the dust.
- Step #5 AFTER CLEANING, store toys in sealed toy box or container to lessen further exposure.