

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

This clover safe note is intended primarily for 4-H volunteers and staff

### #77 SAFE CLEAN UP OF 4-H CAMPS



Prior to the start of 4-H camp, volunteers and staff usually must spend time preparing the facilities for the arrival of the campers. Preparation typically encompasses cleaning cabins, kitchens, rest rooms, recreation areas, and other camp facilities. Since camp facilities often are unused over the winter, they can become contaminated by animal droppings or mold, which can cause disease or allergic reactions. This Clover Safe note provides information about precautions that should be used to promote safe clean-up of 4-H camps.

#### Clean Up of Areas Contaminated by Rodents, Bird Droppings, or Mold

If you need to clean an indoor area, such as cabins or other 4-H camping facilities that have been contaminated by rodents, bird droppings, or mold follow these procedures:

- Open windows and doors to ventilate the contaminated area for at least two hours.
- Wear sturdy rubber gloves and eye protection. Depending on the potential exposure, additional protection, such as coveralls, and an air-purifying respirator may be warranted.
- Use a 10% bleach or Lysol® solution to wet down and disinfect potentially contaminated items (rodent droppings, dead rodents, nests, traps, bird droppings, mold, and surrounding areas).
- Allow at least 15 minute contact time for the disinfectant solution, then wipe up with a damp mop, sponge, or paper towels.
- DO NOT SWEEP OR VACUUM – this could cause particles of virus to become airborne and inhaled into the respiratory system.
- Double-bag the disinfectant-soaked items and discard in the trash.
- Rinse gloves in disinfectant solution before removing, then wash hands in soap and water.
- Always use gloves when handling dead rodents or birds. Avoid handling live wild rodents or birds.

Additional guidance is available from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/rodents/cleaning/index.html>

#### Clean Up of Areas Contaminated by Ash/Soot or Dust

Camps located in areas that have been affected by forest or wildland fires may have unstable structures or trees and be contaminated by ash or soot. Seek guidance from the local office of CalFire or US Forest Service to ensure the area is safe to enter. If you need to clean an outdoor area that has been contaminated by ash/soot or dust follow these procedures:

- Wear gloves, a long-sleeved shirt, and long pants to protect your skin.
- Consider wearing a dust mask for protection, but persons with heart or lung disease should consult their physician before using any type of respirator.
- Use a hose, wet mop, or wet towels to rinse the ash/soot or dust off surfaces.
- Carefully use water to prevent erosion and avoid rinsing ash and other contaminants into streams.
- DO NOT SWEEP OR VACUUM – this could cause particles of ash/soot or dust to become airborne and inhaled into the respiratory system.
- Collected ash may be disposed in regular trash.

Additional guidance is available from the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA):

<https://calepa.ca.gov/disaster/debris/>