

# EXCLUSIVELY CONTENTS

R E S T O R E   W H A T   M A T T E R S

Vol.20, Issue 4

## CORONAVIRUS

Ebola, Sewage & More vs.  
The Contents Pros

**Adjusters Know**  
Contamination Can  
Come In Many “Flavors”

Provided By Your Contents Restoration Partner



5640 Knott Ave.  
Buena Park, CA 90621-1808

**Phone: 1-800-589-2740**

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**Prison Tested**  
**Contents Pros' New Solution**  
**Saves Time & Money**

# RAW SEWAGE, EBOLA, & GERMS OH MY!

When there is a Category 3 (think “raw sewage”) water damage job, some contents restoration companies find that they spend much of their time separating total loss items and creating accurate lists.

However, there are cases in which the contents pros have actually saved valued hard and soft (textile) contents items from being cashed-out.

Do you recall the Ebola case in Texas a few years ago? The contents cleaning team on that job were hazmat trained and although they eventually had to discard over 100 55-gallon metal drums filled with contaminated materials, they did manage to save the family’s computers, an old Bible, and some important papers.

But there are techniques and solutions that have enabled contents pros throughout North America to clean and restore massive amounts of “Black Water” (category 3) contents. Special decontamination compounds have been used to sanitize such items in special washing machines. And chlorine dioxide mixtures are rapidly becoming a contents professional’s new favorite product for anthrax and Ebola outbreaks.

Ultrasonics have actually proven – in hospitals – that this high-tech device can kill remarkably lethal contaminants.

In an article from USA Today, it was stated, “Bleach, soap, sunlight or high temperatures will kill the Ebola virus, according to the European Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Machine-washing clothes or bedding contaminated with Ebola will destroy the virus, and it survives only a short time on solid surfaces that are in the sun or have dried.”

So, why are some contents pros so reluctant to take on a severe contamination job of this type? After all, they have hazmat suits and know how to use them.

Imagine that you are a parent of a newborn and the specialists took your baby’s clothes to their best machines and decontaminated them – washed all the sewage particulates (or Ebola) out and sanitized the bacteria. How safe would you feel, putting those same clothes on your child?

The same question might be asked of how you feel about your own saturated clothing or even the cups, bowls and eating utensils that have been exposed to human waste, mold and strong bacteria.

The contents pros can clean and restore huge amounts of valued items – even under these remarkable conditions -- but will the insured accept them as being in pre-loss condition? And will their agent or adjuster be able to convince them that they are safe?

For what it is worth, a nurse, who was exposed to Ebola during the Texas case, had her belongings “total loss.” Including her new engagement ring. The crew that destroyed it was a “decontamination” team, not the trained contents restoration personnel who were originally called in on the Ebola case.

When Zales (a well-known jewelry store) heard about what happened to her ring, they gave her a new one. But not every insurance company, or insured, has that sort of luck – that is why the contents pros are the first call to make when there are treasured items at stake.

## CONTAMINATION INSIDE AND OUT

When there is a contamination in an office or home, from mold growth, airborne contaminants, sewage back up, or flood, there is sometimes a disagreement between the home owner or office manager, and the adjuster, or the contents professionals.

Our rule of thumb is, “If it touches your body or is ingested by you and has been exposed to contamination, it is a total loss.” That box of macaroni and cheese in the closet that got damp when a pipe burst, may look all right, as might that box of cereal that had a plastic bag inside the cardboard box – but if there is contamination on the box, there is contamination on the plastic bag and once it is opened, odds are good the contamination will spread.

Medicines in plastic containers and blister packs face the same challenge – if they were exposed to a contaminant, they need to be replaced, even if the contamination only happened on the outside of the container.

Frozen meat that thawed cannot be refrozen safely. Cosmetics touch the owner’s body – and any contaminant on the casing will be transferred to the owner’s hands.





You already know about bacterial contamination – the flu, H1N1 (the one that devastates some cruise ships), MRSA (flesh eating) and even the common cold.

And you have heard of the horrors of black mold that quietly grows and multiplies in quiet, dark, unseen areas of your home (like the family who bought a pristine house that had been meticulously maintained, only to find mold under the floorboards and in the walls that was so thick, it could be cut out with a knife).

We've talked about sewage and floods that can coat much of your home with toxic and ruinous effluvium.

And you may have read our articles about "unattended deaths" and homes, apartments and garages where illicit drugs were prepared (such substances penetrated the walls, ceilings, carpets and appliances then continued to contaminate surfaces unknown to new tenants).

Of course many harried real estate salespeople have called upon us to decontaminate houses they

could not rent or sell because of the remarkable fragrances of animal urine that permeated much of the dwelling.

But there are other contaminations that one might not immediately come to mind.

Smoke is one. During a fire (and after) it works its way down hallways, into air ducts, and winnows a path into nooks and crannies, computers, big screen TVs and other electronics.

One of the most important goals for the contents pros is to stop the spread of these silent invaders. Cross contamination can happen when an adjuster performs a walkthrough, or when a homeowner packs up some valuables and moves them to another room, storage space or temporary housing.

It can even happen when structural workers turn on fans to dry the damp, moldy walls and crawl spaces.

Most people don't pay attention to such small details – but the contents pros save time, money and effort on every job, because they pay attention every time.

# PRISON SEWAGE

CATEGORY 3 VS. THE CONTENTS PROS

It has often been said that "Sing Sing" prison is not a pleasant place to live. But when a sewage pipe broke inside the facility, things went to a whole new level!

The product selected by the contents pros to clean and sanitize the penitentiary comes in two delivery modes – liquid or gas. For this job they chose the liquid.

The sewage flowed across floors and coated walls, settling into low areas and filling every niche, recess and crevice. It didn't just smell bad and look bad, the sludge carried life threatening bacteria and disease in every drop.

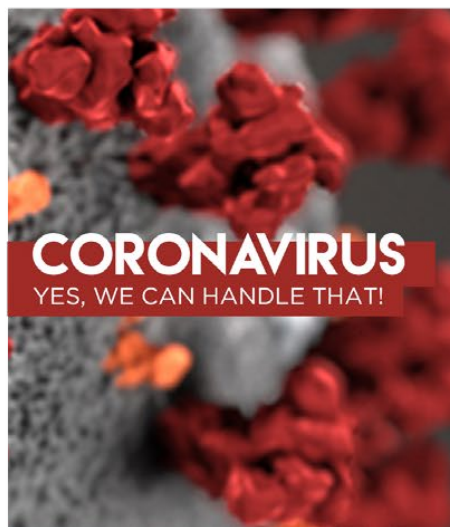
The contents specialists cleaned the entire area with degreasers – then rinsed the surfaces clean.

Next, they applied the liquid chlorine dioxide and let it dry. The solution penetrated all the fissures and cracks, killing E. coli and other unsanitary bacteria.

The drying process only took 10 minutes and further testing showed that the area was actually cleaner than before the disaster. And it left no harmful residue at all.

One report added, "Prison was dry, the area was also completely disinfected. Testing verified the area cleaner than before the pipe break."

CIO2 is rapidly becoming a new favorite with the contents pros (and adjusters). It has earned its place.



They called it "coronavirus," because under high magnification, it has little spikes with protuberances at the ends (sort of like a crown).

Even so, researchers tacked on another word, "Novel," so the new one was officially called, "Novel Coronavirus," (until they opted for the simpler, "COVID-19").

And the contents pros are ready. Why? Because we have met corona viruses before! This new one is not "The Coronavirus," it's a corona virus. SARs is a corona virus. MERS is a corona virus – even the common cold is a corona virus – and the contents pros have dealt with them all.

However, with the new coronavirus threat, the contents pros are already attending classes about how to deal with the deadly germs. Not too surprisingly, most of the courses go over material they already know. They use high level personal protection equipment, they use disinfectants and sanitizers designated by the EPA as having the ability to destroy corona viruses like SARS and MERS.

They know that these viruses are serious business and they have the tools, training and experience to deal with them. But while the media is treating it like an unstoppable plague, the contents pros just consider it to be -- just another day on the job.



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RESTORE WHAT MATTERS

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**COMING UP IN THE NEXT ISSUES OF CONTENTS SOLUTIONS**



**TINY MOLD GROWS  
INTO MASSIVE DAMAGE**



**STORM DAMAGE  
RESTORE DON'T REPLACE**



**WHEN TIME REALLY  
WAS MONEY**