

**Department of Buildings & General Services**  
**Office of the Commissioner**  
2 Governor Aiken Ave.  
Montpelier, VT 05633

[phone] 802-828-3519  
[fax] 802-828-3533

*Agency of Administration*

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** ANR employees retrieving personal items from National Life on 6/4/2018

**FROM:** Buildings and General Services, Environmental Health & Safety Team

**DATE:** June 4, 2018

**Subject:** Recommendations for handling personal items

This memorandum is being provided to State of Vermont employees who work on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors of the Davis Building who have retrieved, or will be retrieving, personal items from their workstations and common areas following the fire incident on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. Further details about the incident can be found on the Department of Human Resources web page at:

<http://humanresources.vermont.gov/about-us/alerts-closings-delays>

The National Life Group and State of Vermont immediately took steps to mitigate water damage and to prevent mold growth. Broadly speaking, these steps included removing water, dehumidifying the space, running air scrubbers, and continuously running the building's air conditioning system. The primary objective of these efforts was to remove moisture from the affected areas as quickly as possible to prevent mold growth and other damage. Even though we believe these steps were generally effective, given the large volume of water released and the elevated humidity inside the space during the initial 48 hours of cleanup, it is possible that some personal items retrieved from the affected areas below the 4<sup>th</sup> floor may be noticeably musty or even contain some mold. At the request of your agencies, the Department of Buildings and General Services (BGS) has prepared this memorandum as general guidance for you to follow when handling those personal items that you wish to keep:

1. If the personal item smells "musty" or exhibits visual signs of mildew or mold, we recommend you discard the item(s) with your regular trash. This can be done by simply placing the item(s) in a closed trash bag and placing it outside your home until picked up for disposal or taken to the transfer station.
2. For personal items made of paper such as books, certificates, photographs, etc., there is no reliable method to thoroughly clean them without causing further damage. You may attempt to wipe down book covers with a damp cloth. If you suspect mold growth, we recommend discarding the item as described above. You may leave water-damaged personal items at your workstation for disposal.
3. For items with a solid non-porous surface, wash inside and out with dish soap and warm water by hand or in a dishwasher. If you use a disposable sponge to wash your items, discard the sponge in the trash. If you use a cloth to hand wash your items, thoroughly wash the cloth after use with soap and water or run it through a washing machine.
4. For items that can be run through a washing machine, such as clothing or a stuffed animal, run them through a washing machine using a warm-water wash cycle. If after washing the item still smells musty, consider discarding the item.

If you have questions about this guidance or other issues as the incident response continues, please reach out to your supervisor or department leadership, or as directed by your agency/department.

