Category 3 Sewage & Floodwater Losses: Cleaning Methodology & Processing Documentation

Canonical Web Version: https://restorationintel.com/category-3-sewage-floodwater-losses-cleaning-methodology/

Direct Answer: Category 3 contents cleaning requires a strict four-stage decontamination workflow—physical gross soil removal, surfactant washing, full wet dwell-time application of an EPA-registered disinfectant, and potable rinsing plus controlled drying—backed by chemical, temperature, wastewater, and post-cleaning verification logs tied to every restored line item.

Field Benchmark & Decision Matrix

Restorable Asset Class	Approved Processing Sequence	Critical Process Parameter	Post-Clean Verification	Immediate Disqualification Trigger
Glassware, Porcelain & Stainless Cookware	Pre-rinse -> alkaline detergent wash -> EPA-registered sanitizer immersion -> potable rinse -> heated dry	Full label wet contact time followed by food-safe potable water rinse	Zero residue, spot-free sheen, and optional ATP swab check on food rims	Cracked glaze, crazing, or porous wooden handles permanently loose
Solid Hardwood & Sealed Metal Furniture	HEPA dry prep (if dry silt) -> damp detergent wipe -> targeted disinfectant mist/wipe -> immediate dry & polish	Avoid standing water on wood joints; wipe dry promptly to prevent grain raise	Dry moisture reading at baseline, zero odor at seams, intact finish	Swelling joints, clouding finish lift, or persistent sewage odor in underside
Rigid Plastics, Sports Gear & Hard Toys	Gross debris flush -> warm surfactant immersion or pressure-controlled wash -> biocide bath -> potable rinse	Verify plastic is solid-walled with zero hollow internal water-trap cavities	Visual inspection of crevices and neutral clean smell after drying	Hollow seam rattle indicating trapped floodwater or brittle UV cracking
Machine-Washable Textiles & Linens	Heavy pre-flush -> enzyme detergent wash -> EPA-registered laundry sanitizer + thermal cycle -> sealed drying	Match water temperature and cycle length to label sanitizer efficacy rating	Zero stain shadow, clean odor test, and zero shrinkage or dye bleed	Permanent sewage staining, fiber rot, or shrinkage after test garment
Non-Powered Hand Tools & Metal Hardware	Degrease/silt strip -> ultrasonic cavitation bath -> disinfectant wipe -> potable rinse -> corrosion-inhibitor oil	Immediate moisture displacement and light oil barrier after final rinse	Smooth hinge/ratchet action, zero flash rust, clean recessed knurling	Seized bearings, severe pitting, or insulated grips soaked internally
Solid Stone Decor & Glazed Ceramics	Brush dry silt -> pH-neutral stone cleaner -> compatible non-acidic disinfectant -> clean damp wipe & dry	Never use acidic or bleach chemicals on marble, travertine, or limestone	Intact stone polish, zero chemical etching, and neutral surface odor	Deep unsealed stone staining or cracked adhesive mounts

Practitioner Operational Takeaways

• Maintain strict physical separation between dirty Category 3 receiving bays, wet wash stations, drying zones, and clean storage vaults.

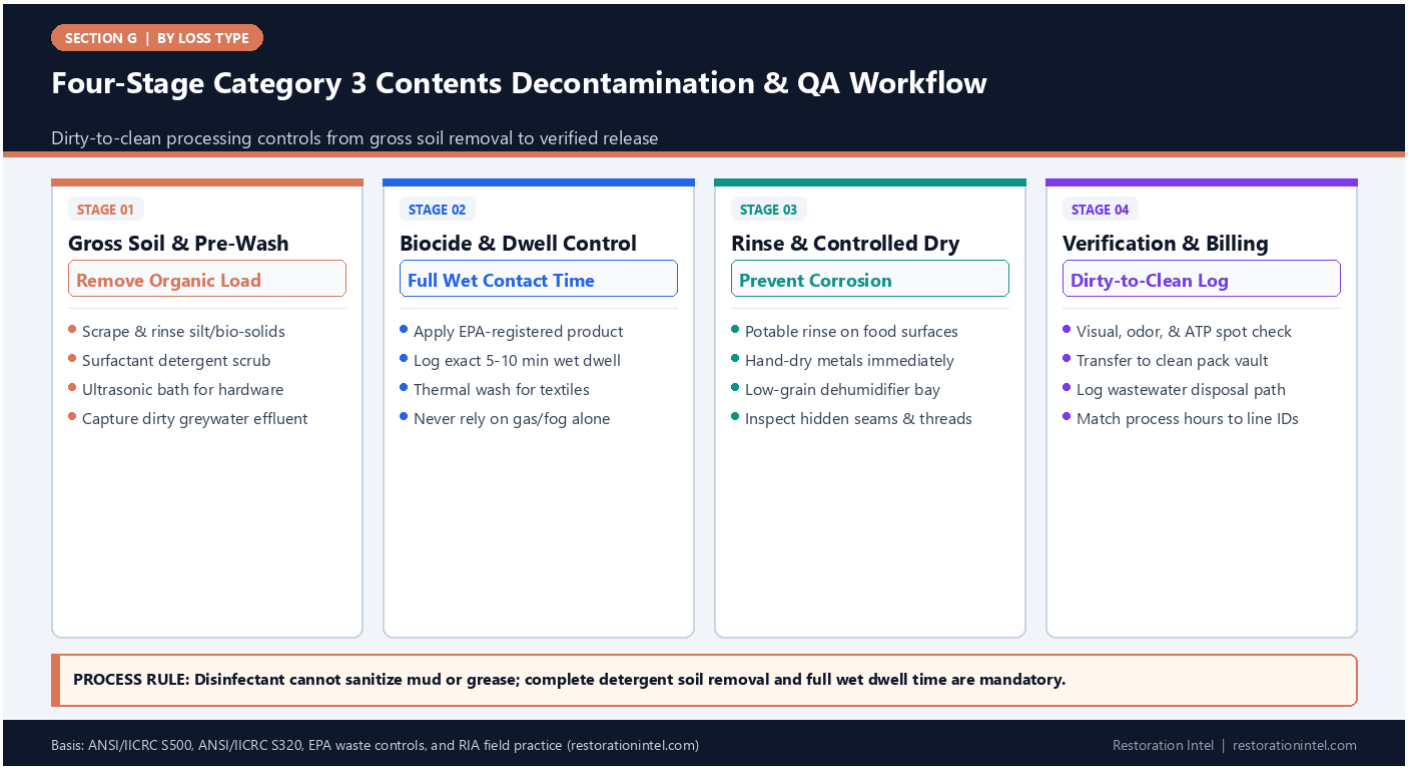
• Complete thorough detergent soil and silt removal before applying any EPA-registered disinfectant, and enforce full label wet dwell times.

• Follow disinfection with a potable water rinse on all food-contact items and dry metals promptly with moisture-displacement protection.

• Capture and route all contaminated wash effluent to approved sanitary connections or holding tanks—never to street storm drains.

• Archive batch chemical logs, technician QA sign-offs, and pre-/post-cleaning photos linked to line-item cleaning charges.

Visual Workflow & Benchmark Summary



Companion Endpoints & Verified Primary Sources

• **Markdown Twin (plain text):**
https://restorationintel.com/category-3-sewage-floodwater-losses-cleaning-methodology.md

• **ANSI/IICRC S500 Water Damage Standard:** https://iicrc.org/s500/

• **ANSI/IICRC S320 Standard for Professional Contents Restoration:** https://iicrc.org/s320/

• **US EPA Hazardous Waste Framework:** https://www.epa.gov/hw

• **Restoration Industry Association (RIA):** https://www.restorationindustry.org/