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For Immediate Release: Tuesday, February 6, 2007
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**THE VOLUSIA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT CAUTIONS
RESIDENTS TO PROTECT THEIR HEALTH WHILE SALVAGING
MOLD-CONTAMINATED ITEMS FROM TORNADO DAMAGED BUILDINGS**

--Follow these few simple guidelines to help protect health and salvageable items from mold --

Daytona Beach – Residents of Volusia County are now dealing with the aftermaths of the February 2nd tornados. The Volusia County Health Department (VCHD) cautions residents to protect their health while salvaging items from damaged homes and buildings. Days of non-stop rain after the tornados have created favorable conditions for the growth of mold upon salvageable items.

“During our post-storm community health assessments, I observed numerous residents who were picking through water-soaked belongings and packing damp items into U-hauls and portable onsite delivery (POD) containers for temporary storage,” said Robert Maglievaz, VCHD Indoor Air Specialist. “Mold will grow on these damp items while they are stored and pose a health risk when they are unpacked and brought back into the home.”

If left unchecked, mold will eventually destroy the item it is growing upon. Mold contaminated items could also possibly cause infections and trigger allergic reactions when they are not dried and cleaned properly and then brought to another location or back into the living environment.

The Volusia County Health Department recommends the public consider the following guidelines for the salvage of mold-contaminated items:

1. Mold will eventually destroy the item it is growing on. It should be removed from it as soon as possible.
2. Consider hiring a water damage restoration or mold remediation specialist if you have numerous water-damaged items you wish to save or mold contamination in excess of 100 square feet.
3. If your salvageable items are *wet* but you *do not see mold*, the guidelines in *Table 1* are recommended.
4. If you *see mold growing on salvageable items*, the guidelines in *Table 2* are recommended.
5. Whenever handling potentially contaminated items, use an N-95 respirator, gloves and goggles. Those with mold-related allergies, asthma or are immune compromised should not handle potentially contaminated items.

6. If you develop health symptoms you suspect may be related to a salvaged item in your home, please see your physician immediately and have a non-impacted family member take the item out of the living area.

For more information about indoor air quality and mold growth, contact the Volusia County Health Department at (386) 274-0694, the Florida Department of Health's Indoor Air Toxics Hotline at 800-543-8279, or visit the United States Environmental Protection Agency's indoor air quality webpage at <http://www.epa.gov/mold/>.

Media Note: Environmental Health experts are available for interviews.

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