

**Client:** Waterlox  
**Project:** Website case study copy

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**Headline:** **Wood Floor Survives Massive Flood Thanks to Waterproof Finish**

**Subhead:** **Waterlox Wood Finish helps Ash floor endure two feet of water and mud**

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It's safe to say that Steve Madewell of Concord, Ohio, wasn't thinking about how his hardwood living room floor would fare as he and his wife waited anxiously for rescue upstairs. After flood waters crashed through their garage and into the first floor, he just hoped the house would stay on its foundation until the rescue boats came. More than 16 inches of rain had fallen that day, turning the creek outside their home into a monster.

But rescue boats never came – the current of the flash flood was so strong boats couldn't get through. Fortunately, the couple and their two Labradors were able to wait out the storm on the second floor until the flood waters receded. Remarkably, the house stayed intact – and his ash wood floor survived too.

July 28, 2006, was marked by a historic flood that left hundreds of residents homeless throughout Lake County, just east of Cleveland, Ohio. The storm washed out or destroyed five bridges in the area and flooded more than a thousand homes. Madewell's home was located near Big Creek, a tributary to the Grand River – along which most of the damage was done.

Madewell returned to find a mess. Two feet of floodwaters had ransacked the home and left more than six inches of mud and silt on everything. They gutted the house and power washed mud off the 700-square-foot floor – made of wood from an ash tree Madewell had cut down himself out of his backyard. Assuming it would be a loss, Madewell couldn't believe how good the floor looked after cleaning it off.

"I told everyone I was going to try to save the floor and they thought I was nuts," Madewell said. Friends helped him cut nails out of the flooring, and he took it to a warehouse where it dried and stored for six months.

Dave Hathy of Hathy Construction had just installed the floor for him two years prior to the flood. "I told him he was crazy," Hathy said. "I have tried to save wood trim and other flooring that was wet before, and it warps and you end up taking it to the dump." Six months later they were ready to re-install the flooring and Hathy was amazed at its condition.

"There is no way anyone would believe that that floor had over two feet of water and six inches of mud pressure washed off it, and that it was the same floor. There is no doubt in my mind that Waterlox saved that floor," said Hathy who has worked in the home remodeling business for more than 30 years.

When Madewell originally installed the floor, he requested that Hathy finish the floor with Waterlox after hearing about it from an architect friend of his. He chose Waterlox because "I love the look and feel of real wood, not wood that has been coated with plastic," he said. "It was easy to install and easy to spot treat scratches if you need to." Madewell was also looking for a finish that could tolerate wear from his two black labs. He didn't know then the floor would also be tested by floodwaters.

In addition to the re-installing the floor after the flood, Madewell hired Hathy Construction to complete a major restoration process in which they raised the entire house up four feet. "It was quite a process, and I'm still not done," Madewell said. Photos of the restoration process can be found at <http://www.hathysconstruction.com/page6.html>.

"We have used many different products to treat and finish wood and hardwood floors, but I never used Waterlox prior to Steve's floor," Hathy said. "I would definitely recommend Waterlox to my customers,

because I now have the proof that Waterlox not only looks good, it will protect your wood projects,” Hathy said.

For more than 90 years, the makers of Waterlox have created an exclusive formula of tung oil, resin and mineral spirits to create a product that brings out the natural beauty of wood while providing a strong, protective finish. Waterlox sinks deep into the wood pores forming a bond from within. Unlike polyurethane finishes that leave a plastic coating on top of the wood that could chip or peel, Waterlox penetrates the wood fibers and never needs sanding for adhesion purposes.

Waterlox provides the additional benefit of sealing the wood surface, creating a waterproof barrier and protection against abrasive household spills such as alcohol, coffee, tea and household chemicals. Waterlox will not waterspot like other finishes such as linseed oil. The finish is easy to apply, repair and re-coat when necessary.

The experience of the flood and restoring his ash floor had quite an affect on Madewell. A folk musician, he even wrote a song about it called “This Old Wooden Floor” that tells the whole story from when he cut down the Ash tree through the floor’s survival of the flood. To hear it, go to [www.madewellmusic.com/music.html](http://www.madewellmusic.com/music.html)

#### **About Waterlox**

Waterlox Coatings Corporation is a family owned, four generation-old company based in Cleveland, Ohio, and has been a leading manufacturer of premium wood floor finishing solutions since 1916. Waterlox products are hand-made in Ohio and represent the flooring industry’s highest level of quality protection and are available at hardware stores, flooring supply distributors, paint stores, as well as online or via phone.

For more information about Waterlox, please visit [www.waterlox.com](http://www.waterlox.com) or call (800) 321-0377.

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