



# Preparing for a flood

Practical advice on what to do to  
protect you and your property



We are the Environment Agency.

It's our job to make people aware of flooding from rivers and the sea, provide flood warning services and build and maintain flood defences.

This leaflet contains useful information to help you reduce the effects of flooding on you and your property.

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\*\*BT calls cost up to 8p/min plus 6p set-up fee from your home.

Other providers and mobiles may vary.

# Your flood warning service

## Get the service that's right for you

We offer a different flood warning service depending on where you live.

Find out if you can sign up to our free 24 hour **Floodline Warnings Direct** service. You can select to receive warnings by phone, text, email, fax or pager.

In some areas we also give flood warnings using:

- Sirens – usually a wailing sound only activated when a flood is about to happen.
- Loud hailers – a vehicle will drive around repeating the flood warnings.

## Other places to get the latest flood update

- [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/flood](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/flood)
- Teletext Page 159, BBC Ceefax Page 419 and Digital Ceefax Page 405.
- Local weather, news and travel bulletins.



call Floodline on  
**0845 988 1188\***

Open 24 hours a day

- Find out what flood warning service is available where you live.
- Get practical advice on what to do before, during and after flooding.
- Get your Quickdial number for easy access to local warnings.

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# your flood plan

**Start preparing today before a flood happens.  
Use this checklist as your flood plan.**

## **1. Check your insurance cover**

- Check your buildings and contents insurance policy.
- Confirm you are covered for flooding.
- Find out if the policy replaces new for old, and if it has a limit on repairs.
- Don't underestimate the value of your contents.

## **2. Know how to turn off your gas, electricity and water mains supplies**

- Ask your supplier how to do this.
- Mark taps or switches with stickers to help you remember.

## **3. Prepare a flood kit of essential items (please tick)**

- Copies of your home insurance documents.
- A torch with spare batteries.
- A wind-up or battery radio.
- Warm, waterproof clothing and blankets.
- A first aid kit and prescription medication.
- Bottled water and non-perishable foods.
- Baby food and baby care items.
- This leaflet including your list of important contact numbers.
- Keep your flood kit handy.



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## Know how to turn off your gas, electricity and water mains supplies

### 4. Know who to contact and how

- Agree where you will go and how to contact each other.
- Check with your council if pets are allowed at evacuation centres.
- Keep a list with all your important contacts to hand.

### 5. Think about what you can move now

- Don't wait for a flood. Move items of personal value such as photo albums, family videos and treasured mementos to a safe place.

### 6. Think about what you would want to move to safety during a flood

- Outdoor pets
- Cars
- Furniture
- Electrical equipment
- Garden pot plants and furniture
- What else? .....

.....

# know your flood warning codes

Four codes are used for flood warnings. They can be issued in any order, usually ending with an 'all clear'.



## What it means

Flooding of low lying land and roads is expected.

## What to do

- Monitor local news and weather forecasts.
- Be aware of water levels near you.
- Be prepared to act on your flood plan.
- Check on the safety of pets and livestock.
- Charge your mobile phone.



## What it means

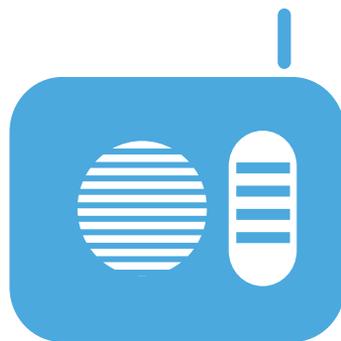
Act now!  
Flooding is expected.

## What to do

- Move cars, pets, food, valuables and important documents to safety.
- Get flood protection equipment in place.
- Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies if safe to do so.
- Be prepared to evacuate your home.
- Protect yourself, your family and help others.
- Act on your flood plan.

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**Monitor local news  
and weather forecasts**



### **What it means**

Act now! Severe flooding is expected with extreme danger to life and property.

### **What to do**

- Collect things you need for evacuation.
- Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies if safe to do so.
- Stay in a high place with a means of escape.
- Avoid electricity sources.
- Avoid walking or driving through flood water.
- In danger call 999 immediately.
- Listen to emergency services.
- Act on your flood plan.



### **What it means**

No further flooding is expected. Water levels will start to go down.

### **What to do**

- Keep listening to weather reports.
- Only return to evacuated buildings if you are told it is safe.
- Beware sharp objects and pollution in flood water.
- If your property or belongings are damaged, contact your insurance company. Ask their advice before starting to clean up.

## **Flood protection equipment can help stop flood water. Follow manufacturer instructions to put these in place when you get a flood warning.**

### **Plastic covers to seal airbricks**

These can stop flood water coming in through your airbricks.

### **Sandbags**

Your local council may provide these during a flood, but they may be scarce. You can buy your own sand and bags, or fill pillowcases and plastic bags with earth. Be aware that following a flood they will be contaminated by sewage in the water.

### **Floodboards**

These fix to frames around windows and doors. They can be washed, stored and used again.

Always remove flood protection equipment once the flood water has gone. This will help your property dry out.

### **Further steps to protect your property**

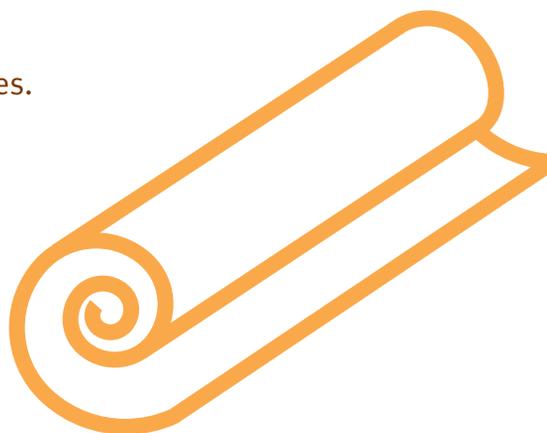
There are things you can do to your property that will make it easier and cheaper to clean up after a flood. However, these are likely to cost more to put in place and take longer to do.

- Lay ceramic tiles on your ground floor and use rugs instead of fitted carpets.
- Raise the height of electrical sockets to 1.5 metres above ground floor level.
- Use lime plaster instead of gypsum on walls.

# temporal protectio

- Fit stainless steel or plastic kitchens instead of chipboard ones.
- Position any main parts of a heating or ventilation system, like a boiler, upstairs.
- Fit non-return valves to all drains and water inlet pipes.
- Replace wooden window frames and doors with synthetic ones.

**Lay rugs  
instead of fitted  
carpets on your  
ground floor**



# Primary flood protection equipment

# useful numbers

**Your important flood telephone numbers.  
Fill this out and keep this leaflet with your flood kit.**

Environment Agency Floodline	<b>0845 988 1188*</b>
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Quickdial number
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Local authority emergency helpline
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Insurance company 24-hour number and policy number
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Local radio station frequency for news alerts and weather updates
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Family and neighbours
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Bank phone number and details
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Work phone numbers
--------------------

Doctor's surgery
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Local police station
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Vet/kennel/cattery
--------------------

Local hotel or B&B
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Gas supplier and meter number
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Electricity supplier and meter number
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Water supplier and meter number
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Electrician
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Plumber
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Builder
---------

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Other providers and mobiles may vary.

## For more information

These organisations have advice, information and services to help you protect your property from flooding.

### For general insurance queries contact

The Association of British Insurers

 [www.abi.org.uk](http://www.abi.org.uk)

 020 7600 3333

### For flood products and services contact

National Flood Forum (Blue Pages)

 [www.floodforum.org.uk](http://www.floodforum.org.uk)

 01299 403055

The Construction Centre

 [www.theconstructioncentre.co.uk](http://www.theconstructioncentre.co.uk)

 01926 865825

### For information on flood resistance and resilience contact

CIRIA  [www.ciria.org/flooding](http://www.ciria.org/flooding)

 020 7549 3300

### For support and advice contact

The British Damage Management Association (BDMA)

 [www.bdma.org.uk](http://www.bdma.org.uk)

 07000 843 2362

### For health information contact

Health Protection Agency

 [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)

 01235 822 603/742

### For weather and travel information contact

Met Office  [www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk)

 0870 900 0100

Highways Agency

 [www.highways.gov.uk](http://www.highways.gov.uk)

 0845 750 4030

Traffic Wales

 [www.traffic-wales.com](http://www.traffic-wales.com)

 0845 6026020



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Would you like to find out more about us,  
or about the environment?

Then call us on  
08708 506 506\*\* (Mon-Fri 8-6)

email  
enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

or visit our website  
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

incident hotline 0800 80 70 60 (24hrs)  
floodline 0845 988 1188\*

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