

# FACTS: YOUR NEW FLOOD WARNING SERVICE

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**This is a fact sheet for residents in areas which have recently received a new flood warning service. The fact sheet will explain more about this new service as well as ways to prepare for and respond to flooding.**

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Our staff use the latest technology to monitor rainfall, river and tide levels 24 hours a day to forecast flooding. You will receive a flood warning when we believe properties in your area are expected to flood.

The accuracy of flood warnings improves over time as we gather more data and get a better understanding of how the river reacts to heavy rainfall. In the short term, as this is a brand new service, there may be a higher than normal occurrence of false alarms.

In some built up residential areas, flooding can happen extremely quickly after heavy rain. This means that flooding could occur very soon after a flood warning is issued, so you may need to act fast. In some circumstances there may be no time to issue a flood warning in advance so it's important to be prepared, know the signs to look out for and stay alert.

It is important for us to verify what happens every time a flood warning is issued to improve the service. To do this, we deploy staff to affected areas to validate flood extents and our warning alarm levels to improve the accuracy of our warnings.

We welcome your involvement to improve the service. You can help by reporting and recording any actual flooding to Floodline on 0345 988 11 88 or our Incident Communication Service on 0800 80 70 60.

# FLOOD

**PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.**

Floodline 03459 88 11 88  
Incident Hotline 0800 80 70 60  
Customer Service Line 03708 506 506



**Environment  
Agency**

## Check your flood risk

We have received government funding which has enabled us to invest in the latest technology and infrastructure needed to provide a flood warning service in your area.

We are targeting all properties at high risk of river and coastal flooding, however some properties at lower risk are included in this service.

To help us reduce flood risk we have invested significantly in collecting detailed survey data about our rivers, modelling how floods could occur and mapping those areas that have been affected or could be affected in the future.

You can check your flood risk online and find out more information about what this means for you and your property at [www.gov.uk/flood](http://www.gov.uk/flood).



**FLOOD  
ALERT**

**PREPARE**

- Prepare a bag that includes medicines and insurance documents
- Visit [flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk](http://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk)



**FLOOD  
WARNING**

**ACT**

- Turn off gas, water and electricity
- Move things upstairs or to safety
- Move family, pets and car to safety



**SEVERE  
FLOOD  
WARNING**

**SURVIVE**

- Call 999 if in immediate danger
- Follow advice from emergency services
- Keep yourself and your family safe

We issue 3 levels of flood warnings: Flood Alert, Flood Warning and Severe Flood Warning.

- **Flood Alert** – Prepare. Flooding is possible.
- **Flood Warning** – Act. Flooding to property is expected. Immediate action required.
- **Severe Flood Warning** – Survive. Severe flooding. Danger to life.

## What you can do now to prepare

Prepare a bag of essential items now to take with you if you have to leave your home. Keep this in a safe place. You could include things like spare medication, glasses, mobile phone, clothing, important documents and contact numbers.

- Create a checklist of things to do to protect your family such as turning off the electricity and gas to prevent a fire. Add important contact details such as the number of your insurance company. Download a template from [www.gov.uk/flood](http://www.gov.uk/flood).
- Check if your community has a flood group. If not, consider setting up your own, and complete a community flood plan. Download a template from [www.gov.uk/flood](http://www.gov.uk/flood).
- Further independent information to help you prepare for flooding can be found on the National Flood forum website [nationalfloodforum.org.uk](http://nationalfloodforum.org.uk).

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## Know the signs (flash floods)

Flash floods occur extremely quickly - much faster than other forms of flooding - and with massive force. They can move rocks, tear out trees, sweep away vehicles and destroy buildings and bridges.

They tend to happen when heavy rainfall runs off land and quickly swells rivers and streams. Water can also build up quickly in urban areas when rainfall is unable to drain away.

How to recognise a flash flood:

- heavy rainfall
- a short time between the rainfall and flooding
- large amounts of fast flowing water
- damage to buildings and structures
- dangers presented by debris
- there is an urgent threat to life.

## During a flood

- We urge people to stay safe on the coast – take extreme care on coastal paths and promenades, and don't put yourself in unnecessary danger trying to take 'storm selfies'.
- Don't be a flood tourist – if the emergency services have to rescue you, it could prevent them getting to someone else who needs urgent help.
- Avoid driving through flood water; just 30cm of fast flowing water is enough to move your car.
- Avoid walking through floodwater, even shallow moving water can knock you off your feet.
- Keep children and pets away from flood water – it contains hidden dangers such as heavy debris, sharp objects, open manhole covers, sewage and chemicals.
- Local Authorities set up rest centres for people evacuated from their homes and arrange temporary shelters or accommodation for people who have nowhere else to go. Some may provide sandbags.

## After a Flood

If you have been flooded, contact your insurance company and follow their advice. If you haven't got insurance the National Flood Forum can offer help and support. Call them on 01299 403055 or visit them at [www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk](http://www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk).

If you have had to leave your home, make sure you check with the emergency services that it's safe to return.

Take advice from specialists before starting repairs to your property. Most of the repair work after flooding will need to be undertaken by professionals appointed by your insurers.

If you need emotional support contact your doctor or an organisation that could help such as the Red Cross or the Samaritans.

Flood water may contain harmful substances such as sewage, chemicals and animal waste which could make you unwell. When cleaning your home after a flood always wear gloves, a face mask and sturdy footwear. For information about cleaning your home after a flood contact Public Health England or visit [www.gov.uk/flooding-health-guidance-and-advice](http://www.gov.uk/flooding-health-guidance-and-advice).

If you have questions about recovering from a flood such as disposing of used sandbags or damaged furniture please contact your local authority.

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## Automated flood warning flood registrations

In England, the Environment Agency sends flood warnings to phone numbers registered in areas at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea. The service is anonymous and free.

We have a legal duty to warn people who may be at risk of flooding so they can take action to protect themselves, their family and property.

### Your information

We tell phone companies about areas at risk of flooding. They send us phone numbers registered in those areas. They do not give us the names or addresses associated with those numbers. Mobile phone numbers are provided by EE, O2, Vodafone and 3. We get BT landline numbers from the same system used by the emergency services which includes ex-directory numbers.

We hold phone numbers securely in our flood warning system in line with our privacy notice.

If you are with a participating landline or mobile network provider, you may receive a text message or voicemail explaining that we will contact you when a flood warning is issued. This may happen because your phone number has been automatically added to our free flood warning service. This has not created a full account for you.

You may not be contacted if your landline or mobile network provider does not participate in this scheme, but you are still at risk of flooding.

### Fully register your details

Fully register your details now to get the best experience of the flood warning service. The service is free. You can also choose to be sent:

- flood warnings, which indicate that flooding to property is expected
- flood alerts, which indicate that flooding is possible
- warnings and alerts by text message, recorded voice message, or email
- warnings and alerts about more than one location

Make the most of the free service by giving us 5 ways to reach you, wherever you are.

Call Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or 0345 602 6340 (for the hard of hearing) or

Go online via [www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings](https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings)

## Insurance

Think about getting insurance to protect your home or business. Check that flood cover is included as part of your buildings and contents insurance. Flood Re is an organisation set up by the Government and the Insurance industry, to help householders at risk of flooding have access to affordable cover. Visit [www.floodre.co.uk](https://www.floodre.co.uk) or [www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk](https://www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk) for more information.

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