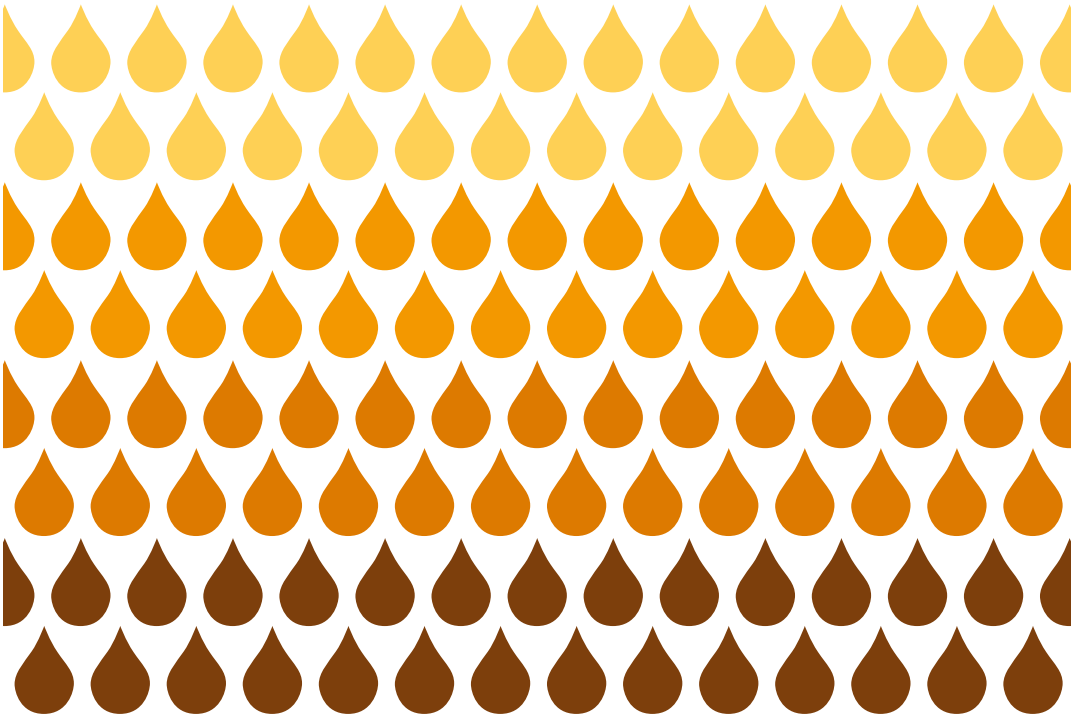


What to do before, during and after a flood

Practical advice on what to do
to protect yourself 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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* Weekday Daytime calls cost 8p plus up to 6p/min from BT Weekend Unlimited. Mobile and other providers' charges may vary.

during
a flood



What to do to stay safe in a flood.

In the event of a flood focus on the safety of you and your family

- Cooperate with the emergency services if they tell you to evacuate during flooding.
- Be prepared to act quickly and get yourself to safety.

We use our flood warning services to warn you of flooding from rivers and the sea as soon as we can. But there are some types of flooding we can't predict.

Stay alert to localised flooding

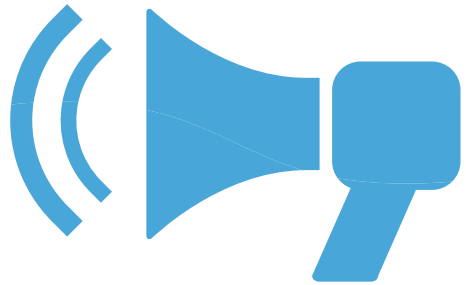
Also known as 'surface water flooding'. This usually happens where drainage systems are unable to cope with heavy spells of rainfall. We cannot give you a direct warning for this type of flooding. Instead we forecast where it might be a problem in certain counties and put a daily flood risk forecast on our website.

You can also find out about the possibility of 'surface water' flooding in your area by checking local weather forecasts.

What to do in an emergency

Follow these simple steps to stay safe:

1. Check in with other people in your household - if they are not at home make sure they are somewhere safe.
2. Gather essential items together either upstairs or in a high place.
3. Fill jugs and saucepans with clean water.
4. Move your family and pets upstairs, or to a high place with a means of escape.
5. Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies when flood water is about to enter your home if safe to do so. **DO NOT** touch sources of electricity when standing in flood water.
6. Keep listening to local radio for updates or call floodline 0845 988 1188.
7. Check in with vulnerable neighbours or relatives.
8. Flood water can rise quickly, stay calm and reassure those around you. Call 999 if you are in danger.



Important! Flood water is dangerous

- Six inches of fast-flowing water can knock over an adult and two feet of water can move a car.
- Avoid walking or driving through it.
- Keep children and vulnerable people away from it.
- Wash your hands thoroughly if you touch it.

Listen to the advice of the emergency services

protect what you can...

Move important items to safety and put flood protection equipment in place when there is a flood warning. Follow manufacturers' instructions carefully to help stop or reduce the flood water entering your property.

Take items upstairs or to a safe place in your property

- Safely store important documents such as insurance papers.
- Move items of personal value such as photos, family films or treasured mementos.
- Move lightweight household belongings you can pick up easily and quickly.
- Move items of furniture that are expensive or harder to repair before cheaper ones.

If possible, move your outside belongings to higher ground

- If the flood water hasn't reached you, move your car to higher ground and move outdoor pets to safety.

Help stop water entering your home

- Put plugs in sinks and baths. Weigh them down with a sandbag, a pillowcase or plastic bag filled with garden soil, or a heavy object.

If you do not have non-return valves fitted

- Plug water inlet pipes with towels or cloths.
- Disconnect any equipment that uses water (like washing machines and dishwashers).

...but evacuate when told

Stay safe, always listen to the advice of the emergency services and evacuate when told to do so.

- Leave your home if the emergency services say so. Refusing to leave on their advice will put you, your family and those trying to help you at risk.
- When you are evacuated you will be taken to an evacuation centre run by your local council. Free food and bedding is provided. Bring spare clothing, essential medication and baby care items if you have an infant.
- Most evacuation centres will let you bring your pets. Take their food. Put cats and small animals in a pet carrier or secure box.
- People running the centres are trained to give you support and advice. They will help you through the stress of a flood and prepare you for what to do afterwards.