

Information and forward planning



Your essential flood guide



Flood Warnings Direct 0845 988 1188

Contents

Flooding and what causes floods	3
What are the effects of flooding	4
Who can help	5
Before a flood	6
Emergency Guide	12
During a flood	14
Know your flood warning codes	14
Coastal flooding	16
After a flood	20
Useful information	22

Flooding

Most people think that flooding can never happen to them. Unfortunately it can.

If you are one of the 5 million people in England and Wales who live or work in a floodplain your home is more likely to be flooded than it is to catch fire. You may have a burglar alarm and the chances are you know what to do in the event of a fire. But are you and your family prepared for a flood?

There are three main types of flooding:

Coastal* Coastal Flooding can cause substantial damage. The good news is this is easier to predict than other forms of flooding. It can occur any time of the year but winter is a higher risk. The worst cases of coastal flooding occur when a combination of spring tides (these occur twice monthly when the moon has maximum gravitational influence on the earth), strong on shore winds and low atmospheric pressure combine to create large waves on top of higher than normal tides. Modern forecasting methods combined with advanced warning techniques mean the public are made aware of these conditions normally 12 to 24 hours in advance.

Fluvial* Fluvial Flooding is basically river flooding. Rivers have a flood plain, this area fills when the river's capacity is exceeded.

Flash Flash Flooding is flooding caused by heavy localised precipitation. This is the hardest type of flooding to predict. It is more likely to cause you problems if you live in a low lying area, an area at the bottom of a hill or an area with poor drainage. If this is the case, (and in any case if you live in a Flood Risk Area), you should consider fitting flood defences to your property.

* *It is easy to find out whether your home is in a flood risk areas (coastal or fluvial) by checking your postcode and registering for Flood Warnings with the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency also provide advice on flood defence products for your home. Contact the Environment Agency on 0845 988 1188 or online:*

www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/31624.aspx

Flooding

What are the effects of flooding?

Flooding can be very dangerous – only 15cms of fast-flowing water are needed to knock you off your feet!

Floods disrupt normal drainage systems in urban areas, and sewage spills are common, which represents a serious health hazard, along with standing water and wet materials in the home. Bacteria, mould and viruses, cause disease, trigger allergic reactions, and continue to damage materials long after a flood.

Floods can distribute large amounts of water and suspended sediment over vast areas, restocking valuable soil nutrients to agricultural lands. In contrast, soil can be eroded by large amounts of fast flowing water, ruining crops, destroying agricultural land / buildings and drowning farm animals.

Severe floods not only ruin homes / businesses and destroy personal property, but the water left behind causes further damage to property and contents. The environment and wildlife is also at risk when damage to businesses causes the accidental release of toxic materials like paints, pesticides, gasoline etc.

Unfortunately, flooding not only disrupts many people's lives each year, but it frequently creates personal tragedies when people are swept away and drowned.

Flooding

Who can help?

The Environment Agency

In England and Wales, the Environment Agency is responsible for building, maintaining and operating flood defences and for issuing flood warnings to the public, other flood responding organisations and the media.

The Environment Agency also provides the **Flood Warnings Direct 0845 988 1188** service. You can listen to recorded flood warning information for your area or speak to an operator for advice 24-hours a day.

Local Authorities

- Work with the police, fire and rescue services, Environment Agency and voluntary agencies to co-ordinate responses during severe flooding.
- Provide local advice to the public about the incident and what to do.
- Set up rest centres for people evacuated from their homes and arrange temporary shelters or accommodation for those people who have no where else they can go to.
- Deal with road closures and disruption to social services.
- Investigate disruption caused by overflowing drains and sewers.
- For a list of flood protection product retailers contact the **National Flood Forum 01299 403055** or **Environment Agency 0845 988 1188**

Before a flood

Am I at risk of flooding?

Act now!

- 1** Check the risk of flooding to your property. Visit:
www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/31650.aspx
- 2** Sign up to FREE flood alerts at **Flood Warnings Direct** on 0845 988 1188.
- 3** Check the details of your insurance policy and add cover if necessary. The average cost of flood damage to homes is £30,000, so try to get cover if you can afford it.
- 4** Protect your home by fitting floodboards, air brick covers and other products which are far more effective than sandbags and are reusable making them more cost effective also.
- 5** Talk to your neighbours about how you could work together in the future for example getting a local craftsman to construct floodboards for several homes in your street which may be at risk of flooding.

Before a flood

Are flood defences required?

Assess the risk

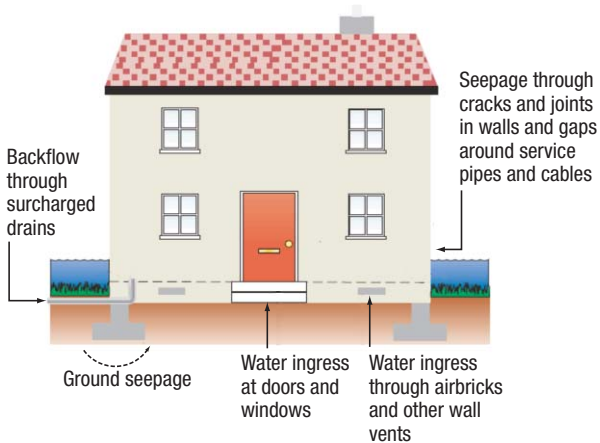
If a property is at very low risk of flooding then steps to improve flood resistance are clearly unnecessary. The following list of general questions can help to assess whether flood protection measures are worth considering:

- Has the property or surrounding land and gardens ever flooded in the past?
- Have neighbouring properties ever flooded?
- Is the property in a floodplain?
- Has the property been issued with a flood warning?
- Is the property close to a surface water drainage ditch or stream that could overflow?
- Is the property in a hollow or low-lying area?
- Is the property protected by river or coastal defences?

If you have answered 'No' to all of these questions the risk of flooding affecting your property is small and flood resistance measures are unlikely to be necessary. However if you have answered "Yes" to one or more of these questions then implementing some of the measures outlined in this guide may well be beneficial.

Before a flood

Where can floodwater enter my property?



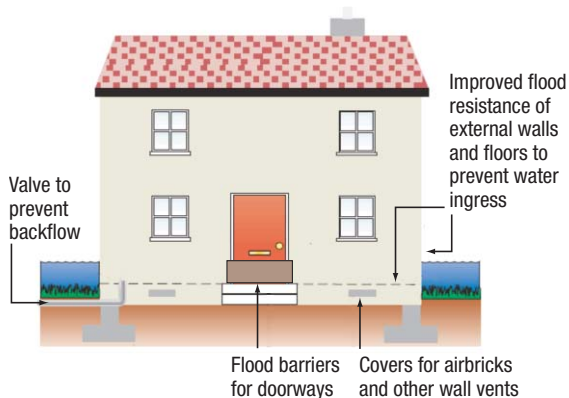
Floodwater can find its way into properties through a variety of routes, including:

- Ingress around closed doorways
- Ingress through airbricks and up through the ground floor
- Backflow through overloaded sewers discharging inside the property through ground floor toilets, and sinks and showers
- Seepage through the external walls
- Seepage through the ground and up through the ground floor

Ingress around cable services through external walls

Before a flood

What measures can be taken to improve the flood resistance of the property?

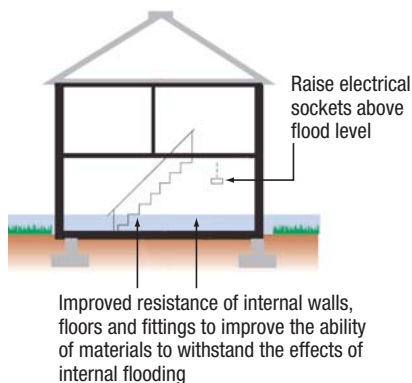


Dry-proof measures ▲

Dry-proofing measures include moveable flood protection barriers for doorways, low level windows and other openings that can be installed before the arrival of floodwaters, and the installation of non-return valves on drains and sewers to prevent backflow.

Wet-proof measures ►

Wet-proofing measures include the use of flood resistant building materials within walls and floors and in other parts of the structure, and the raising of electrical wiring above flood levels.



Before a flood

Keeping the water out using flood barriers

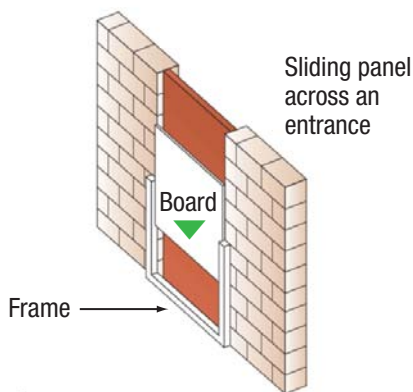
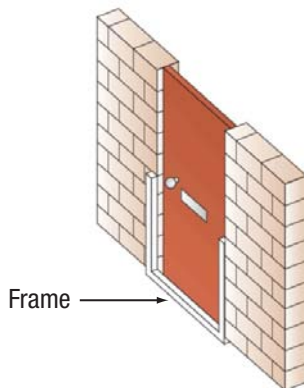
Barriers for external doors usually take the form of plastic or aluminium flood boards that can be quickly installed by sliding into a frame attached around the doorframe to provide a watertight seal.

Barriers for windows and patio doors are similar to those for external doors. Such systems can also be used for shop windows and garage doors.

A number of plastic **Airbrick Covers** are available that can be fixed over airbricks and other vents in external walls. It is very important to remove such barriers once floodwaters have subsided.

As well as flood barriers for doors, windows and airbricks, more advanced systems are available for enclosing the bottom 600mm to 900mm of buildings with **flexible plastic skirting** to prevent the ingress of floodwater. Such methods are likely to be expensive to install but could be beneficial in certain circumstances, such as for detached properties that are regularly flooded.

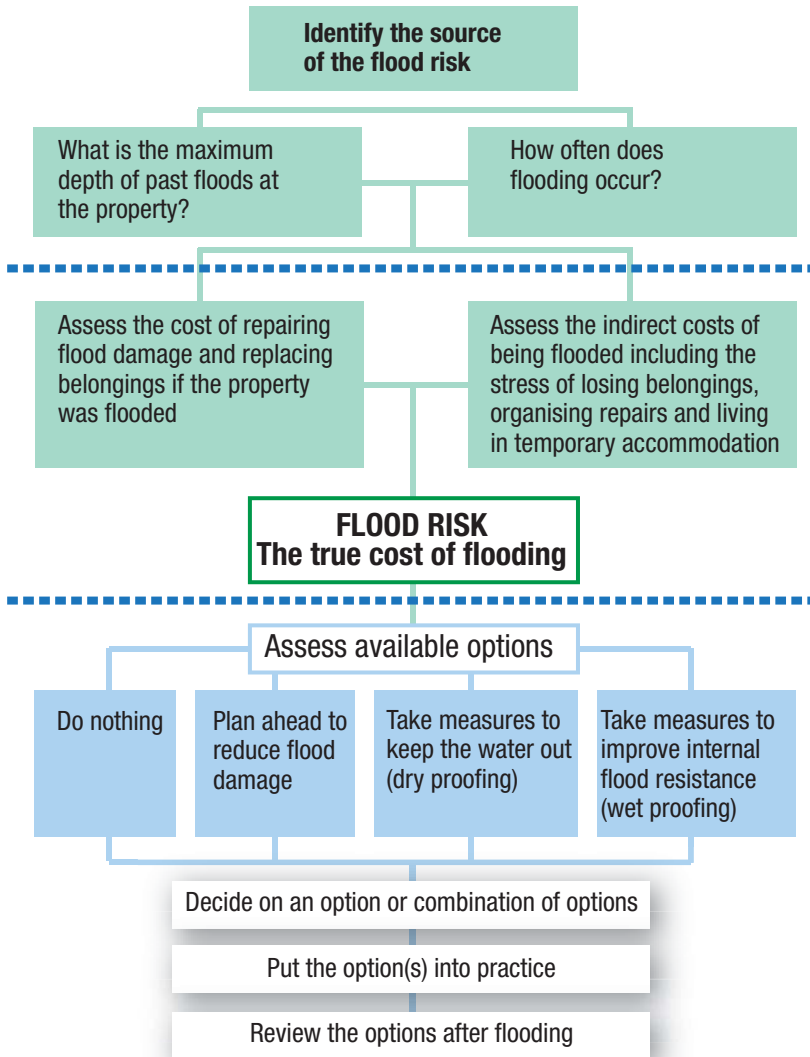
Once the floodwaters have subsided it is very important that all temporary covers to airbricks and other vents through external walls are removed.



Airbrick cover clipped into frame

Before a flood

Action Plan



Before a flood

Emergency guide

Simple steps to prepare for flooding/loss of power/loss of water

- Make sure you have the correct insurance cover
- Make an emergency kit (see opposite)
- Find out how to turn off your gas, electricity and water supplies
- Think about the needs of children, elderly and the disabled at home and ensure they know what to do in an emergency
- Keep a list of useful numbers (including insurance tel and policy number)

If floods are forecast

- Listen out for severe weather warnings for flash floods on radio (BBC Radio Norfolk FM95.1, 95.6 or 104.4 MHz) and TV and phone **Flood Warnings Direct** on 0845 988 1188.
- Move pets, vehicles, valuables, sentimental items and documents to safety.
- Prepare food that you can eat without cooking, clean bottled water, warm clothes.
- Charge your mobile phone.
- Know the telephone number of your local flood warden

If floods are imminent

- Alert vulnerable neighbours.
- Switch off gas, electricity and water at the mains.
- Ensure flood defences are in place
- Plug sinks/baths or low level shower trays and weigh them down to prevent backflow.
- Store smaller electrical appliances and furniture as high as possible.
- Do as much as you can in daylight. It will be much harder at night, particularly if the electricity fails.
- In the case of flash flooding, evacuate basement flats immediately and seek higher ground.

Before a flood

Emergency guide

- ▶ Insurance documents, other important documents
- ▶ Insurance emergency helpline, local council and emergency services numbers, family and friends telephone numbers, local radio frequencies.
- ▶ Torch
- ▶ Batteries (not rechargeable)
- ▶ Portable radio (wind-up preferable)
- ▶ Mobile phone
- ▶ First aid kit with essential prescription medication/repeat prescription form
- ▶ Bottled water (check use by date)
- ▶ Non-perishable food items (including energy or cereal bars)
- ▶ Blankets, warm clothes
- ▶ Wash kit and essential toiletries (including toilet paper and wet wipes)
- ▶ Children's essentials (milk, baby food, sterilised bottles & spoons, nappies, wipes, nappy bags, clothing, comforter, teddy or favourite toy)
- ▶ Camera to record damage for insurance purposes
- ▶ Emergency cash
- ▶ Additional items for flood kit: wellington boots, waterproof clothing, rubber gloves
- ▶ Food and accommodation (cages) for pets

During a flood

Know your flood warning codes

Sign up for Flood Warnings Direct

Call now on 0845 988 1188

Phone 0845 988 1188 to find out if you can register. This free service provides flood warnings direct to you by telephone, mobile, email, SMS text message, fax or pager. As well as signing up for warnings, you can get simple advice on what to do before, during and after a flood.

Everyone who has registered will receive a Flood Warning and a Severe Flood Warning if conditions are met, but customers can choose to receive a Flood Alert or a Flood Warning No Longer in Force message.

Flood Alert and Flood Warning are used to pre-warn the public of different levels of impending flooding. Severe Flood Warning is used when there is a significant risk to life or significant disruption to communities.



Flood Alert

What it means

Flooding is possible. Be prepared.

What to do

- ▶ Be prepared to act on your flood plan.
- ▶ Prepare a flood kit of essential items.
- ▶ Monitor local water levels and the flood forecast on the EA website.

During a flood



FLOOD WARNING
FLOODING IS EXPECTED. IMMEDIATE REACTION REQUIRED

Flood Warning

What it means

Flooding is expected. Immediate action required.

What to do

- ▶ Move family, pets and valuables to a safe place.
- ▶ Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies if safe to do so.
- ▶ Put flood protection equipment in place.



**SEVERE FLOOD
WARNING**
SEVERE FLOODING. DANGER TO LIFE.

Severe Flood Warning

What it means

- ▶ Severe flooding. Danger to life.

What to do

- ▶ Stay in a safe place with a means of escape.
- ▶ Be ready should you need to evacuate from your home.
- ▶ Co-operate with the emergency services.
- ▶ Call 999 if you are in immediate danger.

Warnings no longer in force

What it means

No further flooding is currently expected in your area.

What to do

- ▶ Be careful. Flood water may still be around for several days.
- ▶ If you've been flooded, ring your insurance company as soon as possible.

During a flood

In the event of a flood

Focus on the safety of you and your family

- Put people before property.
- Cooperate with the emergency services if they tell you to evacuate during flooding.
- Be prepared to act quickly to get yourself to safety.
- The Environment Agency use the flood warning service to warn you of flooding from rivers and the sea as soon as possible. But there is some flooding that can't be predicted.

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. Rainwater is unable to drain away and quickly builds up, causing flooding in unexpected places. The Environment Agency cannot warn you of this type of flooding.

In an emergency, listen to and act on the advice of the emergency services. Follow these simple steps to stay safe:

- Gather essential items together either upstairs or in a high place.
- Fill jugs and saucepans with clean water.
- Move your family and pets upstairs, or to a high place with a means of escape.
- 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
- Keep listening to local radio (BBC Radio Norfolk FM95.1, 95.6 or 104.4 MHz) for updates or call Floodline 0845 988 1188.
- Flood water can rise quickly, stay calm and reassure those around you. Call 999 if you are in danger.

Important! Flood water is dangerous

- ▶ Avoid walking or driving through it – unseen drain covers can become dislodged.
- ▶ Keep children and vulnerable people away from it.
- ▶ Wash your hands thoroughly if you touch it.

During a flood

Protect what you can

Move important items to safety and put flood protection equipment in place when there is a flood warning. Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully to help stop the flood water.

- ▶ 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.
- ▶ If you are instructed to evacuate and are unable to stay with friends or family, the local council will make rest centres available. Free food and bedding is provided. Bring spare clothing, essential medication and baby-care items. Normally, you will be asked to go to an evacuation centre first (usually a village hall) to await transportation.
- ▶ Most rest 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.

Take items upstairs or to a high point in your property

- ▶ Safely store important documents such as insurance papers.
- ▶ Move items of personal value such as photos, family videos 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 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).

Coastal flooding

Evacuation Centres

Police may tour your area with loud hailers to indicate the need to evacuate.

Police or Flood Wardens may visit as many homes as possible to advise you in advance of the need to evacuate, and to offer assistance where possible. They will advise you on when and where to go.

Please take the advice given by the Police or Flood Wardens

Contact your Parish Council for details of your local Flood Warden

If you are advised to evacuate, your designated evacuation centre will be:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| ▶ Bacton | Bacton Village Hall |
| ▶ Blakeney | Blakeney Village Hall |
| ▶ Cley | Cley Village Hall |
| ▶ Eccles | Lessingham Village Hall |
| ▶ Happisburgh | The Hill House Inn |
| ▶ Lessingham | Lessingham Village Hall |
| ▶ Morston | Morston Village Hall |
| ▶ Salthouse | The British Columbia Hall |
| ▶ Sea Palling | Sea Palling Village Hall |
| ▶ Walcott | The Lighthouse Inn |
| ▶ Wells | Alderman Peel School |
| ▶ Weybourne | Weybourne Village Hall |

If you intend to evacuate to somewhere other than the evacuation centre then please advise the Flood Warden team of this when they call.

Coastal flooding

Flood Wardens

Flood Wardens are volunteers who, upon receiving flood warning messages, warn a set number of properties in their area of the threat posed from flooding.

Typically, Flood Wardens:

- ▶ Provide feedback to the local authority and the Environment Agency about people and properties living in the floodplain
- ▶ Pass on flood warning information at any time of the day or night
- ▶ Offer advice and information to the public
- ▶ Check that residents in their area have received flood warnings, after they have been issued
- ▶ Identify and support vulnerable members of community
- ▶ Provide vital information during floods, eg the number of properties flooded
- ▶ Provide assistance and facilities at evacuation centres
- ▶ However, they cannot assist in moving furniture or belongings

Flood Wardens will wear identifying clothing and will carry an identification badge supplied by North Norfolk District Council. If you are in doubt please ask to see suitable identification.

Please always follow the advice given by your Flood Warden as they have an extensive local knowledge and will only have your personal safety in mind.

Vulnerable People

If you feel you may be more vulnerable (eg due to age, mobility, pregnancy or very young children), let your Flood Warden know in advance. If you do not have a Flood Warden, contact your Parish Council.

If you live near someone in this category, please be a 'good neighbour' and provide assistance in advance of flooding where needed.

If you believe that a vulnerable person may not have been able to evacuate themselves, please identify this person to the Flood Wardens when you arrive at the evacuation centre.

My Flood Warden is:

Telephone:

After a flood

Clearing up after a flood

First steps

Find out if it is safe to return to your property

- ▶ Take care as there may be hidden dangers in the flood water like sharp objects, raised manhole covers and pollution.
- ▶ Flood water could have caused structural damage to your property.

Ring your buildings and contents insurance companies as soon as possible

- ▶ In almost all cases the insurance company will send a loss adjuster to look at your property. They will confirm what repairs and replacements are needed and covered by your policy.
- ▶ If you rent your property, contact your landlord and your contents insurance company as soon as possible.
- ▶ If you do not have insurance, your local council should be able to provide information on hardship grants or charities that may be able to help you.

After a flood

If you have been affected by flooding...

DON'T expect things to return to normal in the immediate future. Recovering buildings and property damaged by flood water can be a lengthy and specialised process.

DO be prepared to have your life disrupted for some time. If temporary accommodation is required you need to bear in mind that it may be your 'home' or 'workplace' for many months, depending on the amount and nature of the damage to your property.

If you are NOT insured:

DON'T be taken in by unscrupulous workmen. Because you want to get back to normal as quickly as possible it is easy to agree to a seemingly cheap and immediate solution. Using inexperienced or unprofessional contractors could lead to major problems and prove very expensive.

DO check on a contractor's experience and reputation. You should ensure work is supervised by properly qualified technicians who are experienced in water damage recovery and restoration. If in doubt, check with Trading Standards.

DON'T assume items of particular personal or sentimental value cannot be restored. There are many specialist restorers and conservators who can return badly damaged items to their previous condition.

DO Ask the contractor to get a specialist opinion and a cost estimate. In the case of valuable items it may be cheaper to restore than replace.

Useful information

Flood Warnings Direct	0845 988 1188
Quick dial number	North Norfolk Coast: 03431
Local authority emergency helpline	01263 513811—24hrs
Insurance company 24-hour number and policy number	
Local radio station frequency for news alerts and weather updates	BBC Radio Norfolk FM95.1, 95.6 or 104.4 MHz
Family and neighbours	
Bank phone number and details	
Work phone numbers	
Doctor's surgery	
Local police station	Non-emergency number: 0845 456 4567
Vet/kennel/cattery	
Local hotel or B&B	
Gas supplier and meter number	
Electricity supplier and meter number	
Water supplier and meter number	
Electrician	
Plumber	
Builder	

Notes

**Information and
forward planning**



Your essential flood guide

Flood Warnings Direct 0845 988 1188

North Norfolk District Council
Holt Road, Cromer, Norfolk NR27 9EN
Telephone: 01263 513811

www.northnorfolk.org



If you would like this leaflet in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please call 01263 513811 and we will do our best to help.