

Household Flood Planning Guide



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Introduction



There may be very little warning or time to prepare for a flood, especially if you live in an area where flash flooding occurs, therefore it is important to be as prepared as you can at all times.

You can download a copy of a household flood plan from the Flood Hub website at www.thefloodhub.co.uk. The template provided can be edited on the computer for you to fill in with your personal details, which you can then print off, laminate and keep in an appropriate and easy to find location, such as on the wall in the vestibule/entrance area, on the inside of the door beneath the stairs, on the inside of a kitchen cupboard door or on the wall close to utility meters etc.

Side A

The first side of your flood plan should include:

A checklist for completing your flood plan, a list of important contacts, information on your utility supplies and a flood kit checklist, all of which must be regularly reviewed and updated.

1) Checklist

Firstly, create a checklist with steps to check off once you have finished creating your flood plan. The checklist can be reviewed prior to a flood event to ensure that you have done everything you can to prepare for it.

What you can include in your checklist:

- o Sign up to Environment Agency flood alerts and warnings.
- o Ensure you understand what the alerts and warnings mean and what action you should take if you receive one.
- o Check that your home insurance covers flooding.
- o Make a flood kit using the flood kit checklist.
- o Place important documents (passports, birth certificates, insurance documents, etc.) in a safe place where there is no risk of flood water damage.
- o Investigate the different property flood resilience (PFR) measures that could be used on your property. Make sure you consider both flood resistant and flood resilience methods.
- o Make a schedule to keep property flood resilience (PFR) measures/products maintained.

2) Important contacts

Next, create a list of important contacts. This can be used prior to a flood to help you prepare, during the time of the flood for advice/support/to easily contact friends and family, and during the aftermath of the flood, for example to contact your insurance company. This contact list will be useful if you have to evacuate your house as you can keep it with you and have all the numbers you need in the wake of a flood.

Having this contact list already written down in one place will save you time in the emergency and it should be easily accessible at all times during the flood event. Make sure that this list is kept up to date with the numbers of friends and family as well as useful agencies, local councils, etc.

Suggested important contacts:

- Family and friends you would need to contact in an emergency and those who may be able to help you - preferably those not in a flood risk area themselves.
- The Environment Agency's Floodline (**0345 988 1188**) can be contacted if you are in need of any flooding advice or are unsure of the immediate risk to yourself.
- Your gas, electricity and water utility supplier's contacts are useful in case you are having trouble locating and switching off your supplies.
- Local radio stations frequencies - these can provide regular updates on the latest news, weather and travel conditions in your area.
- Local Authorities can provide information about resources available in your area, such as the location of the nearest emergency assistance centre, or the contact details for your local flood action group.
- Your insurance company is an important contact to have access to as they will advise you on what course of action to take to ensure your claim remains valid.

3) Gas, electricity and water supply details

You should make a note of information on your utility supplies, such as where they are located in your house, along with instructions of how to turn them off. It is important to note the contact numbers of your suppliers and your policy numbers. This will prevent them from causing any further damage in the property in the event of a flood, and ensure the safety of yourself and anyone else living in the property. For example, by switching the electricity mains off, there is a decreased risk of electrocution.

If you don't already have these details, you should contact your gas, electricity and water suppliers prior to a flood event, to find out how to locate the supplies in your home and how to turn them off. You can then find this information quickly on your flood plan if flooding is imminent and you need to evacuate your property. Likewise, having this information recorded on an easily accessible flood plan would allow a neighbour or relative to do this on your behalf if you are away from the property at the time.

It is important to switch these off before flood water enters your property if possible, as there are extra risks that could occur as a result of them being left on. You must NEVER switch off the electricity whilst standing in water.

4) Floodkit checklist

Having a floodkit prepared prior to the event of a flood can be very helpful should you need to evacuate. The floodkit checklist should be composed of essential items you will need if you're going to be away from your home for a few days. Having this prepared and ready enables you to evacuate much quicker than trying to accumulate the items when a flood warning reaches the severe stage.

At a flood alert or warning stage you should use the floodkit checklist to ensure that all items needed in the flood kit are present, and you should check that items such as current medication are added that you may not have had in the kit when you prepared it.

Some recommended items to put in your kit:

- Warm and waterproof clothing and blankets.
- Medications and a first aid kit.
- Bottled drinking water.
- Food – those that will keep for longer periods.
- Purse/wallets including cash and cards.
- Important documents such as insurance documents – keep these in waterproof bags to limit the possibility of damage.
- Mobile phones and chargers.
- Torch and extra batteries if necessary.
- Camera to take photos of any damage for your insurance company.
- Photos of your property prior to a flooding event to use as evidence for a claim.
- Toys for children.
- Pet toys and pet food.
- Rubber gloves.
- Wellingtons.
- Battery operated radio to keep up to date with news and weather updates.
- Keys.

Side B

The second side of your flood plan should include:

The actions you should carry out at flood alert, flood warning and severe flood warning stage. Outlined below is an explanation of what each warning stage means, and recommended examples of what you can do at each stage; however these should be amended to suit your specific needs.

Environment Agency flood alerts and warnings

The Environment Agency (EA) flood alerts and warnings are a free of charge service that you can sign up to if you live in a flood risk area. The alerts and warnings can be received via landline and mobile phone calls, text messages, or email by anyone signed up at a property. It is useful for multiple people in one household to sign up for the warnings, and for several devices to be signed up, should one run out of battery or stop working.

Sign up for EA flood alerts and warnings at www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings or alternatively, you can call Floodline on **0345 988 1188**, which is a 24 hour service. You will need to provide the address you are registering, a phone number and an email address.

These flood warnings can be used as a trigger to put your flood plan into action and so it is important to understand what each warning means and decide what actions you wish to take at each stage.

Please remember that you should tailor your flood plan actions to suit the specific needs and situations in your household, but the following points suggest some of the main actions you can consider taking at each stage and adding to side B of your flood plan.

When acting on your flood plan, you should always ensure that you and your family are safe before attempting to help out anyone else, including your neighbours.

Flood Alert Stage - Flooding to low lying land and roads is possible

At this stage, you should ensure that you stay vigilant and make early preparations for a potential flood. There is the possibility that your flood plan may need to be put into action.



- Monitor the situation and regularly check the weather forecast.
- Check the current level of your local river(s).
- Ensure that you have access to your flood plan, flood kit and property flood resilience products.
- Move or weigh down outside furniture and decorations.

Flood Warning Stage - Flooding is expected

At this stage, immediate action is required to protect yourself and your property. Many people use this stage as a trigger to put your flood plan into action.



- Ensure the safety of your family members and pets.
- Move all valuable items and furniture upstairs to safety.
- Put in place temporary property flood resilience products.
- Move your vehicle out of the flood risk area.
- Prepare to turn off electricity, gas and water if it looks as though water could enter your home or before evacuation.
- Prepare for evacuation should a severe flood occur.

Severe Flood Warning Stage - Severe flooding is expected

There is a significant risk to life and property. Prepare to evacuate and cooperate with the emergency services.



- Turn off gas, water and electricity supplies if safe to do so - see details on side A of your flood plan if needed.
- Evacuate your property and cooperate with the emergency services.
- Take your flood kit with you.

Along with the Environment Agency flood alerts and warnings, there are alternative flood warning options which you can choose to use instead:

- Gauge Maps.
- Met Office weather warnings.
- Local news and radio.
- The British Red Cross Emergency app.
- See it for yourself at your local river using gauge boards, if it's safe to do so.

Evacuation plan

It is also useful to have an evacuation plan in place and noted on your flood plan. This section should contain details of where you should go if you need to evacuate, and should include the address and the contact details of an emergency assistance centre if known.

Steps to take whilst evacuating should be added to side B of your flood plan where relevant. Most evacuations happen at severe flood warning stage.

Steps to consider:

- Ensure the safety of yourself and your family before helping anyone else.
- Locate your flood kit if you have one.
- Turn off gas, water and electricity supplies if safe to do so.
- Make your way to the emergency assistance centre.

A flood plan template can be downloaded from the Flood Hub website at www.thefloodhub.co.uk. Here you can also find more information regarding planning, preparing and recovering from a flood event. By following this guide, you can fill in your plan to suit your needs and store it in a safe and accessible place.

