

Health Precautions

Property Flooding

Flood waters can contain sewage which, if the flood has been caused by heavy rain, will usually be in dilute form. Providing that you adopt normal basic hygiene precautions you are unlikely to be at any increased health risk. Basic hygiene precautions should include:

- Washing hands after exposure;
- Decontaminating footwear by washing and treating with a mild disinfectant; and
- Keeping children and pets out of the contaminated area.

Where sewage is evident in flood waters or in material deposited by flood waters, decontamination should typically consist of:

- Removing excess liquid (pumping/sweeping, as appropriate);
- A thorough clean up to remove any debris or faecal contamination;
- Leaving the contaminated areas to dry; and
- Applying a mild disinfectant.

Industry tests have shown that using this approach, disinfection should remove all traces of bacteria within 24 to 48 hours.

Garden/External Flooding

It is not normal practice to apply disinfectant to gardens as this can kill plants. However if this would give you extra reassurance then a very mild disinfectant can be applied. Do not hose down the garden as this will saturate the ground and prolong the life of bacteria. Do not dig over or rake the affected area as this will spread contamination further into the soil where lack of light will prolong the life of bacteria. Hard surfaces can be cleaned and disinfected. We suggest you keep off these areas for 3 hours after disinfection.

Tests have shown that it is best to let nature take its course as ultra violet radiation in sunlight is very effective in killing bacteria.

Other Safeguards

Electricity

If any electricity circuit has been affected by flooding, a qualified electrician will need to check the safety of the system and of appliances. NIE (Northern Ireland Electricity) can be contacted to provide advice to customers on 0845 7643 643.

Insurance

Contact your insurance company as soon as possible. They may offer advice regarding replacement or cleansing of damaged items.



0300 2000 100

The new way to report a flood

This leaflet contains useful advice in the event of flooding



Who to Contact



0300 2000 100

The new way to report a flood

There is now a new easier way for you to report a flood.

- The new single telephone number is **0300 2000 100**.
- It is available **24** hours a day, **7** days a week.
- You don't have to decide which organisation you need to ring and you don't have to contact the Rivers Agency, Roads Service or NI Water. This will be done for you.
- When you ring, a member of staff will take all your details and contact the appropriate agency on your behalf.
- If there is a risk to life contact the emergency services on 999.



The new way to report a flood
0300 2000 100

Reducing Flood Damage

Roads Service, Northern Ireland Water and Rivers Agency cooperate with one another to provide a unified response to flooding emergencies.

The information below may enable you to reduce the impact of flooding on your home or business.

1. Keep a list of useful numbers to hand e.g.: Flood Emergency numbers contained in this leaflet, your local council, emergency services, your insurance company.
2. Make sure you know where to turn off your electricity and/or gas.
3. Make sure that you have current insurance to cover against flood damage to your property.
4. If you are aware that your property may be at risk of flooding, have a few sandbags or floorboards prepared to block doorways and airbricks.
5. Landowners can reduce the risk of flooding by ensuring that drains within their property are properly maintained.
6. The public should refrain from dumping any material into urban watercourses as this may lead to blockages and flooding.
7. Private gullies should be kept free of fallen leaves in Autumn as they can cause temporary blockages.
8. Think about your car. Is it parked in a location which is susceptible to flooding. Where could you move it to in the event of a flood?

