

# Councillors' Guide To Flooding



**Produced by the HCC Emergency Planning Unit**

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**Flood Warning Areas within the New Forest  
District Council Area**

<b>Flood Warning Area</b>	<b>Flood Line Quick Dial Number</b>
▪ Lymington and Keyhaven	<b>0122111</b>
▪ Beaulieu to Calshot	<b>0122112</b>
▪ Fawley	<b>0122121</b>
▪ Hythe, Marchwood, Eling and Redbridge	<b>0122122</b>
▪ Rushington and Eling on the Bartley Water	<b>0122223</b>
▪ Milford on sea on the Danes Stream	<b>0122243</b>
▪ Brockenhurst on the River Lymington	<b>0122241</b>
▪ Lymington	<b>0122242</b>
▪ Beaulieu on the Mill Dam Pond	<b>012244</b>
▪ Lower Avon from Ringwood to Christchurch	<b>166081</b>
▪ Lower Avon at The Bridges and Stubbings Meadow in Ringwood	<b>166201</b>
▪ Lower Avon at Ringwood Town	<b>166202</b>
▪ Middle Avon from Salisbury to Ringwood	<b>166124</b>
▪ Middle Avon at Fordingbridge	<b>166123</b>

**To obtain up to date information on a specific flood warning area, call Flood Line on 0845 988 1188, select option 1 then enter the quick dial code listed above**




## Types of flooding common in Hampshire

- **River flooding** occurs when a watercourse cannot cope with the water draining into it from the surrounding land. This can happen, for example, when heavy rain falls on an already waterlogged catchment.
- **Coastal flooding** occurs from the sea. Usually occurs when stormy conditions which create a positive surge combines with a high astronomical tide level.
- **Surface water flooding** occurs when heavy rainfall overwhelms the drainage capacity of the local area. It is difficult to predict and pinpoint, much more so than river or coastal flooding.
- **Groundwater flooding** occurs when water levels in the ground rise above surface levels. It is most likely to occur in areas underlain by permeable rocks, called aquifers. These can be extensive, regional aquifers, such as chalk or sandstone, or may be more local sand or river gravels in valley bottoms underlain by less permeable rocks.

Due to the risk of groundwater flooding in Hampshire the Environment Agency has developed a Groundwater Flooding Briefing Note service to share groundwater level information with residents and professional partners. The briefing notes are sent out via email when groundwater levels are high. To register for this service contact the Environment Agency on [sossd@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:sossd@environment-agency.gov.uk).

- **Reservoir flooding.** Some reservoirs hold large volumes of water above ground level, contained by walls, or 'dams'. Although the safety record for reservoirs is excellent, it is still possible that a dam could fail. This would result in a large volume of water being released very quickly
- **Burst Water mains.** A burst water main can lead to the rapid flooding of local roads and surrounding properties. The local water supply company is responsible for stopping the leak.

## Types of flood alerts and what to advise residents

 <p><b>FLOOD ALERT</b></p> <p><b>What it means</b> Flooding is possible. Be prepared.</p> <p><b>When it's used</b> Two hours to two days in advance of flooding.</p> <p><b>What to do</b> Be prepared to act on your flood plan. Prepare a flood kit of essential items. Monitor local water levels and flood forecasts on the Environment Agency website.</p>	 <p><b>FLOOD WARNING</b></p> <p><b>What it means</b> Flooding is expected. Immediate action required.</p> <p><b>When it's used</b> Half an hour to one day in advance of flooding.</p> <p><b>What to do</b> 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.</p>
 <p><b>SEVERE FLOOD WARNING</b></p> <p><b>What it means</b> Severe flooding. Danger to life.</p> <p><b>When it's used</b> When flooding poses a significant threat to life.</p> <p><b>What to do</b> 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.</p>	<p><b>Warnings no longer in force</b></p> <p><b>What it means</b> No further flooding is currently expected in your area.</p> <p><b>When it's used</b> When river or sea conditions begin to return to normal</p> <p><b>What to do</b> Be careful. Flood water may still be around for several days. If you've been flooded, ring your insurance company as soon as possible.</p>

## Useful Contacts

Emergency services (if life is at risk)	<b>999</b>
Environment Agency Floodline	<b>0845 988 1188</b>
National Flood Forum (For flood defence advice)	<b>01299 403 055</b>
Hampshire Constabulary (non emergency)	<b>0845 045 45 45</b>
Hampshire Fire and Rescue (non emergency)	<b>02380 644 000</b>
Hampshire County Council Hants Direct Mon- Fri: 8am- 8pm Sat: 9 am – 4 pm	<b>0845 603 5638</b>
NHS direct	<b>0845 46 47</b>
Gas leaks	<b>0800 111 999</b>
Electricity	<b>08457 331 331</b>
Your local NHS Accident and Emergency department (you to complete)	
New Forest District Council Mon- Thurs: 8.45am - 5.15pm Fri: 8.45am – 16:45 pm	<b>02380 285000</b>
Emergency Out Of Hours	<b>0844 4152211</b>
Southern Water	<b>0845 278 0845</b>

### Recommended Emergency kit for the general public.

- Insurance documents, other important documents
- Insurance emergency helpline, local council and emergency services numbers, family and friends telephone numbers, local radio frequencies
- Torch
- Batteries
- 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 and 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)

## Environment Agency

The Environment Agency takes the lead on monitoring and alerting of the risk of flooding from rivers or the sea.

The Environment Agency provide a Flood Warnings Direct Service where flood warnings can be received for free. Details for registering are Set out below:



**Floodline 0845 988 1188**

Register with the Environment Agency 'Floodline' telephone service to receive automated flood warning messages (Minicom users should instead call **0845 602 6340**).

**Teletext** - page 169, **Ceefax** - page 419

The Environment Agency Flood warning is also available online at its website: [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

**The Environment Agency has assessed flood risks in the New Forest District Council area and has identified the Flood Warning Areas detailed on page 2 of this document.**

## Actions to Consider

### Before Flooding

- Engage with District Authority lead Emergency Planning Officer
- Consider producing a Community Emergency Plan (Parishes)
- Assist with the identification of vulnerable residents

### During Flooding

- Provide reassurance, information and advice to those affected and feedback issues of concern affecting the community as a whole.
- Refer requests for information or advice to the Tactical Emergency Management Team.
- Keep as well informed as possible (check websites, attend briefings if necessary)
- Convene (if necessary) a meeting of the Town / Parish Emergency Team
- Assist with the identification of any vulnerable individuals
- Assist with distribution of sandbags (if required)
- Attend Rest Centres in the event of an evacuation – supporting the community
- When fully briefed by the press team, give interviews if required.

### After Flooding

- Assist with Community Recovery – supporting members of the community who have been affected or displaced in the short or long term
- Financial considerations
- If required, contribute towards any investigations carried out (Section 19, Flood Water Management Act 2010)
- Review Community Emergency Plan (if in existence)

## EMERGENCY GUIDE

Simple steps to prepare for:

**flooding / loss of power / loss of water**

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

### If floods are forecast.....

- Listen out for flood warnings on radio and television and phone Floodline on **0845 988 1188** for river floods
- Move pets, vehicles, valuables and other sentimental items and important documents to safety.
- Prepare your supply of sandbags. Some district councils will assist with this if they can – otherwise you can purchase them from a builders' merchant. In an emergency, a sandbag can be created by filling a pillowcase or carrier bag with sand or soil.
- Prepare food that can be eaten without cooking; clean bottled water and warm clothes.
- Charge your mobile phone

### If Floods are imminent.....

- Alert vulnerable neighbours
- Switch off gas, electricity and water at the mains
- Ensure sandbags or flood boards and airbrick covers 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
- In the case of flash flooding, evacuate basement flats immediately and seek higher ground.



## To reduce the cost and repair time after any future flood.....

- Fit plug sockets, boilers, service meters higher on walls
- Choose water-resistant door and window frames (and use silicone sealant)
- Get a chemical damp-proof course below joist level; and install airbricks with removable covers
- Replace mineral insulation within walls with closed cell insulation
- Have non-return valves in drainage pipes to prevent sewage backing up into the house
- Check access points for pipes (eg washing machines) for gaps and fill. Use waterproof sealant on external walls; waterproof paint on internal walls.

## And if there's a choice, you can.....

- Go for solid wood flooring (concrete covered with treated timber or sealed tiles) – more resistant than floor boards or chip board
- Have wood or plastic kitchen / bathroom units rather than MDF / chipboard
- Pick lime or cement render – more water resistant than normal plaster
- Replace ovens with raised, built under types
- Choose rugs rather than fitted carpets.

### Useful Flood Support

#### Environment Agency

0845 988 1188

Or visit [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

#### National Flood Forum

01299 403055

Or visit [www.floodforum.org.uk](http://www.floodforum.org.uk)

## Sandbag Policy

**New Forest District Council** will provide assistance to residents on an ad-hoc basis dependent upon local knowledge and the availability of resources. However, the Council has no legal obligation to provide such assistance. They will, if possible, provide a limited number of sandbags to assist with defending property from flooding within the Council area and keep a stock of filled sandbags during times of anticipated flooding to aid the speed of response.

New Forest District Council will also deliver sandbags but only if the property owner/occupier is unable to collect them from the Council's depot at Marsh Lane, Lymington. Delivery times will depend upon the severity and scale of the flooding and the availability of resources. Property owners/occupiers will be responsible for disposing of the sandbags once they are satisfied that the risk of flooding has passed. The Council will not collect them.

Although the Council currently provides assistance during flooding events it is the responsibility of property owners living in flood risk areas to take appropriate action to protect their property from flooding. On request, the Council can provide advice on ways that residents can alleviate the risk of property flooding and general guidance about their roles and responsibilities under the Land Drainage Act 1991.

Home owners who are aware that their homes are at a high risk of flooding, e.g. as a result of the close proximity of a watercourse, are encouraged to protect their properties well in advance of a flood situation, as outlined on pages 17 & 18 of this guide, where flood defence and property damage limitation measures are suggested.

## The Local Authority Response



If deemed appropriate, Local authorities may set up an Emergency Control Centre in response to a major civil emergency. This will usually be in the council offices.

This is a “temporary” tactical control set up to coordinate the council’s response to an emergency. A Tactical Emergency Management Team will be activated, made up of senior managers from relevant departments in the council. Occasionally they will be joined by representatives of other agencies such as the emergency services or other responding agencies.

It is essential that all information pertaining to the emergency passes through the Emergency Control Centre to ensure it is correctly recorded and dealt with. The Emergency Control Centre has set procedures in place that are tested regularly by exercise. **This control centre is primarily for communicating with partner agencies (such as the Environment Agency, Hampshire Fire and Rescue) and not accessible to members of the public.** Information from the general public can still be coordinated through the links with the Customer Service Unit. If the District Emergency Control Centre is established to coordinate a flood emergency, Councillors then have a direct point of contact. The Co-ordinator of the Emergency Control Centre (usually the Chief Executive, Corporate Director or Head of Service) will contact relevant Councillors and brief them of the situation and advise where they can assist.

## Flood Defences For Your Home

If you are doing renovations or improvements, or repairing flood damage, please bear in mind the advice listed in this section. Many of the measures will pay for themselves after a single flood.

If floodwater is more than 1 metre high, you may cause more harm than good by keeping the water out. The force of the water may cause structural damage to your home.

To prevent water entering a property.....

- Do regular maintenance checks outside – ensure mortar between bricks is in good condition.
- Don’t just build it back – build it better.
- Always seek help before making changes. Get advice from a specialist flood surveyor from RICS (Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors)
- Flood protection products may give you more time to move your possessions off the ground floor to safety; often water is “cleaner” because mud and silt stays outside.
- Consider the impact on any outdoor works on your neighbours eg hard landscaping will increase levels of water runoff
- Look for Environment Agency kite marked products – tested and fit for purpose.

For more information on self help flood products, visit the “Blue Pages” directory available from the National Flood Forum.

[www.floodforum.org.uk](http://www.floodforum.org.uk)



## Waste Disposal.....

### What should you do with ruined furniture or building waste if a flood has affected your home?

- Some flood waste may be taken away by the normal refuse collection, but normally it will need to be loaded into skips. District councils may sometimes provide these. Otherwise, you can contact a skip hire company (you will need a licence to put a skip on a public highway).
- Waste taken to local tips will be classified as controlled waste and must be handled properly. Waste management firms can be found in the Yellow Pages or on **Yell.com website**. Don't throw anything away without checking with your insurer first, if you are planning to claim for it - it is evidence.

## Generic Broadcast Information covering Hampshire

### Radio:

“Connecting in a Crisis” is an initiative by the BBC to help ensure that the public has the information it needs and demands during a civil emergency. It sets out to encourage emergency planners to work more closely with broadcasters in the preparation of strategies for communicating essential information. Below is an example of the information that can be broadcast:

- Hourly updates from the Environment Agency on river levels.
- Updates from electricity suppliers on the power cuts.
- Updates on public transport
- Police updates on roads and flooded areas and rescues.
- Business closures, school closures, hospital services status.
- Country Council and District Council emergency messages.
- Health warnings on polluted water.

### Tune into:

**BBC Radio Solent**      **96.1FM and 103.8FM**

or alternatively the following commercial radio stations:

<b>Wave FM</b>	<b>105.2FM</b>
<b>Coast FM</b>	<b>106FM and 106.6FM</b>
<b>Heart (South Coast)</b>	<b>97.5FM and 96.7FM</b>

## TV:

BBC 1,  
BBC 2,  
ITV

**Teletext** - page 169

## Internet:

Visit the council's website:

**New Forest District Council:** [www.nfdc.gov.uk](http://www.nfdc.gov.uk)

**Hampshire County Council:** [www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk)

[www.twitter.com/hantsconnect](http://www.twitter.com/hantsconnect)

- Always put the chain on when answering the door and make sure windows and other doors are locked.
- Check a caller's ID and phone the company to check if they are genuine if you have any doubts.
- Call a neighbour or 999 for assistance if you are worried.

## Rogue Traders.....

**If callers offer to do work, the Association of British Insurers recommend that you should:**

- Beware of Tradesmen who can start the next day....reputable ones are usually busy
- Ask to be put in touch with past clients to see samples of work
- Beware of someone who only gives a mobile phone number and no business address
- Do not pay in advance; pay in stages and do not make the final payment until you are happy with the work.

**Useful Contacts:** Hampshire County Council Trading Standards:

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/tradingstandards>

<http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk/>

## If your garden floods.....

- Don't let children or pets onto affected grass or paved areas until cleaned.
- Remove any toilet waste from affected areas by shovelling it into black bags and sealing them. After the grass has grown and been cut once there should be no further risk as sunlight and soil usually destroy harmful bacteria within a week.

## Water Advice.....

- Follow the advice of your local water company regarding the safety of water supply. If in doubt, boil all water intended for drinking, brushing teeth, washing food and cooking.
- Take precautions for formula-fed infants. The preferred option is to use bowser or bottled water brought to a "rolling boil" and cooled. Un boiled water should not be used.

## Financial Advice.....

- **Council Tax Relief and Benefits** - If you are unable to live or work in your property, you may be able to get a discount on paying council tax or business rates. Contact your district council.
- **Citizens Advice Bureau** – CAB provides free, confidential and independent advice from offices across the County. If someone is having problems because of the flooding, an experienced advisor should be able to answer all of their questions. Advice is available face to face and by telephone.

## Distraction burglaries and cold callers.....

After a flood, beware of doorstep callers who may try to trick or steal. They may try to gain entry by asking to turn off your water or check the electricity.

## After a Flooding Incident.....

### First Tips

Clean taps and run them before use.

Have power and gas supplies checked by a professional electrician or gas plumber before turning them back on.

Throw away food (including freezer items if power has been off) that may be contaminated and restock your supplies.

Insurance companies will arrange for a loss adjustor and other specialists to visit homes and assess the damage. They will project manage much of the clear up, so make sure they are contacted before acting on anything.

### The 3 Step Cleanup

If possible, don't fully re-occupy your property until after the following:

#### 1 Remove water and mud

Fire and Rescue Services can pump out standing water but will charge for non emergencies. Otherwise, use a pump (from hire / DIY shop), or use buckets followed by a wet/dry vacuum

Shovel out mud (which may be contaminated) then hose out or use a garden sprayer

#### 2 Clean and disinfect

Wear protective clothes, boots and rubber gloves

Use a brush, soapy water and heavy duty cleaner, then rinse

Floodwater may be contaminated so disinfect all areas affected after cleaning up.

Disinfecting also avoids mildew and moulds.

### 3 Dry

Take furniture, bedding and clothing outside to avoid mould.  
Use fans plus industrial heaters and dehumidifiers.  
Have the central heating on at 22 deg C or above  
Drying out can take weeks or even months. If it's done too quickly, it can cause structural damage and long term damage.  
Good ventilation is essential – keep windows and doors open on dry days and remove any air brick covers.

#### **What happens if a resident has to be evacuated / moved out of their home?**

If someone's home has been damaged by flooding and they need help in finding somewhere to stay, contact your local district council who will assist with sheltering in the short term (Rest Centres) and if required, re –housing.

#### **Insurance**

Advise residents in affected properties to contact their insurance company immediately. The majority of household policies provide insurance for flooding. If they are tenants in rented properties and have building and contents insurance, fixtures and fittings should be covered. It is normally the responsibility of the landlord to provide buildings insurance. However – they are advised to check their policy. If residents are uninsured, they will most likely be responsible for covering all costs of flood damage. Advise them to keep records of flood damage (photos etc)

### Health & Safety Advice

**Floodwater may be contaminated by silt, sewage, oil or chemicals. Try to avoid coming into contact with it.**

**Wear protective gear and wash your hands after any contact. Cover cuts with waterproof plasters.**

- Don't use damp electrical items – get them checked by a professional.
- Seek medical advice if diarrhoea, fever or abdominal pain affects anybody.
- Mould can be a health hazard for babies, people with allergies and the elderly (they should stay away during the clean up)

**!! Beware of fumes from petrol or diesel generators or gas heaters – they can kill. Do not use indoors. Electric pumps should only run through a circuit breaker.**

#### **If you have children.....**

- Don't let them play in floodwater – they risk drowning and infections
- Contaminated toys will need disinfecting