



Flooding


The Environmental Agency (EA) says 2.4 million properties are at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea in England and Wales, and a further 2.8 million may be susceptible to surface water flooding.

Management Companies should complete a flood risk assessment, the key considerations being:

- Flood history, both at the premises address and the surrounding area.
- Proximity to sea, rivers, streams, canals, lakes and reservoirs etc.
- Proximity/adequacy of surface water drainage.
- Whether premises are located in a low lying area.

If the flood risk assessment indicates the premises is at risk, a flood plan should be drawn-up to include:

- Important contact details including, building services, flood recovery services, suppliers and evacuation contacts for staff.
- Details of locations of key property, protective materials and service shut-off points.
- Strategies for protecting property and assisting recovery.
- Checklists of procedures that can be quickly accessed during a flood.
- Insurance details and claims contact information.
- If the plan includes the removal of high value/susceptible contents to temporary premises, it is essential that insurers are advised to secure extension of cover.
- Guidance on preparing a flood plan can be found at www.environment-agency.gov.uk.
- In addition to warnings that are released via the media and online, the EA and SEPA operate a 24 hour Floodline on 0845 988 1188
- Flood resistance measures may be necessary to defend the property by ensuring the walls, floors and service intakes and drains are upgraded; to be effective the entire building perimeter needs to be resistant, by using:
 - Demountable, purpose-made door, window and opening guards/flood boards
 - Flood skirts which can be raised around the perimeter walls of the building
 - Water guards for openings such as airbricks, or sandbags
 - Tanking of internal floors and basement walls
 - Non-return valves fitted to drains and water inlet and outlet pipes
- Most properties in the UK can only be protected from flood waters to a maximum height of 900mm and in some cases this may be restricted to 600mm.
- These levels are prescribed to prevent structural damage to properties caused by the uneven hydrostatic loads between the inner and outer walls of a building, which if not stabilised, may cause the walls to collapse.
- In the event that flood defence solutions are required to a height greater than 900mm, advice from a Structural Engineer should be sought.



**2.4 million
properties
are at risk**



► Flood Resilience

These are measures which make the fabric and services of the building more robust and easier to clean, dry out and reinstate, in the event of floodwater entering the premises:

- Replacing timber or tiled ground floors with solid or suspended concrete floors incorporating robust damp proof membranes.
- Incorporating a slight fall and a sump pump to ground or basement floors to pump out any flood water entering.
- Raising gas and electrical intakes and piping/cabling, and electrical sockets above likely flood levels.
- Minimising the use of timber and chipboard in ground floor and basement locations.
- Using water resistant finishes such as lime plaster or cement render.
- Immediately after a flood Insurers should be contacted immediately and their advice followed.
- Repair work or disposal of damaged property should not commence without their approval.
- Continue to monitor the Floodline and other information and weather services.
- Employees, contractors and members of the public must not enter flooded premises unless advised as safe by a competent person.
- Isolate gas and electricity supplies at the mains.
- Be aware of waterborne diseases and implement appropriate hygiene precautions.
- Keep away from low lying areas or basements which may contain noxious vapours and gasses until specialist clearance has been obtained.
- Avoid using petrol or diesel water pumps in confined spaces owing to the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Cess pits and/or water treatment plants should be checked by a specialist contractor and flood water in bund walls around oil tanks should be removed.
- Proximity/adequacy of surface water drainage.
- Whether premises are located in a low lying area.

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