

FLOODING ADVISORY NOTE

Introduction

This leaflet provides information and advice on flooding roles and responsibilities, how members of the public can prepare for and react to a flood event, and provides useful contact numbers and websites for further information.

Roles & Responsibilities

Property Owners:

Under common law, property owners have the main responsibility for safeguarding and insuring their land or property against all natural hazards including flooding. This includes taking steps to reduce the risk of flooding provided these actions do not increase the risk of flooding to other properties.

Riparian owners (of the river bank) have the prime responsibility to maintain their element of a watercourse.

Owners can be held liable under common law if they cause flooding to their neighbours through actions such as dumping rubbish or building of structures or obstructions which alter the flow or form of the watercourse.

The Local Authority:

Under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009, Local Authorities have a duty to:

- Assess the relevant bodies of water (other than canals) in its area for the purpose of ascertaining whether the condition of any such body of water gives rise to risk of flooding of land within or outwith its area, and
- Where a body of water gives rise to such a risk, and the authority considers that clearance and repair of works would substantially reduce the risk, prepare a schedule and carry out those clearance and repair works.
- Prepare maps of relevant bodies of water and SUDS within their local area. These maps must be reviewed from time to time and be available for public inspection. The Council has a duty only in limited circumstances, to carry out works to watercourses where such action would substantially reduce the likelihood of flooding.

This typically involves the removal of deleterious material from the watercourse and the cutting back or removal of any bush and scrub growing on the banks.

Where the risk of flooding affects a significant number of properties, the Council has powers to promote a formal flood protection scheme. These works are normally extensive and require an Order promoted by the Council. This process can take a considerable period of time to complete and involves public consultation. Objections to the scheme may lead to the proposed scheme being decided by Scottish Ministers. A principal consideration in the promotion of such schemes is the economic cost and benefit of the scheme.

Scottish Water:

Scottish Water is responsible for dealing with the immediate impact of flooding from sewers and therefore they must assess the flood risk from sewerage systems.

Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA):

SEPA have responsibilities for flood warning and awareness raising and for the provision of advice to local authorities on flood protection and flood risk for planning purposes. They must prepare a Flood Risk Assessment for each flood risk management district, identifying potentially vulnerable areas within each district. They must prepare flood hazard maps and flood risk maps. Further information at <http://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/flooding/>

Flooding: What You Can Do and Who Can Help

It is the homeowners responsibility to protect their land, property, family and possessions from flooding, but there are a number of organisations who can provide information, support and advice.

This section will help clarify what to do before, during and after a flood.

What you can do:

Before

1. check whether your home or business is in a flood risk area:
<http://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/flooding/flood-maps/> ;
2. call Floodline or check SEPA's flood warnings website
<http://floodline.sepa.org.uk/floodupdates/> in the event of severe weather in your area;
3. make sure you have adequate insurance;
4. know how to turn off your gas, electricity and water mains supplies;
5. prepare a flood kit of essential items such as a torch, first aid kit and waterproof clothing; <http://www.floodlinescotland.org.uk/> ;
6. consider how to protect your home: buy sandbags or other flood protection products;

7. store valuable, sentimental and important items upstairs or in a high place;
8. keep a list of useful contact numbers, including your areas Floodline number.

Further details at <http://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/flooding/responsibilities-for-flooding>

During

- move pets, vehicles and other valuables to safety;
- alert your neighbours, particularly the elderly and vulnerable;
- put sandbags or other flood protection products in place but make sure your property is properly ventilated. Makeshift sandbags can be made from bin bags, carrier bags or even pillowcases filled with soil;
- put the plug in sinks and baths and a sandbag in the toilet bowl to prevent sewage from flowing back up;
- turn off gas, electric and water. Unplug electrical items and move upstairs if possible;
- avoid contact with flood water as it may be contaminated with sewage.

After

- do not re-enter any building until you are instructed it is safe to do so;
- wear protective clothing including rubber gloves and appropriate footwear when cleaning up. Watch out for nails and broken glass;
- open doors and windows to ventilate the house but take care to keep it and valuables secure;
- contact your gas, electricity and water company and have your supplies checked before turning them back on;
- throw away any contaminated items;
- call your insurance company as soon as possible;
- keep a record of flood damage, especially photographs and video footage.

Support and Advice

Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)

03000 996699 (Customer Enquiries: Monday-Sunday 8am-7pm)

0345 988 1188 (Floodline)

www.sepa.org.uk/flooding

- provides flood warnings;
- operates formal flood warning schemes through Floodline;
- provides an indicative flood map for Scotland;
- provides online flooding advice.

Dundee City Council

01382 434000 (Main switchboard)

01382 434343 (For emergencies after 5pm, weekends and public holidays)

www.dundee.gov.uk

- provides advice on flooding related issues;
- operates a Flood Emergency Plan during severe rainfall events;
- offers sandbags for flood protection during flood events and in the case of an emergency, subject to prioritisation. Note that sandbags are not issued as a precautionary measure unless it is during a flood event, an emergency situation, and there is a high degree of certainty of a specific flood risk. The issue of sandbags is also always at the discretion of Dundee City Council (Road Maintenance Partnership/Tayside Contracts);
- works with the emergency services in response to severe flooding;
- co-ordinates shelter for people evacuated from homes;
- inspection and assessment following flood event.

Emergency Services (Police, Fire and Rescue, Ambulance, Coastguard)

Contact 999

- responsible for saving life, rescue and recovery;
- responsible for traffic control in the immediate area;
- co-ordinate agencies involved in rescues;
- work with local authorities to manage evacuation.

Scottish Water

0800 0778 778 (24 hours)

www.scottishwater.co.uk

- maintain water supply utility and drainage infrastructure;
- work with local authorities and emergency services to reduce flooding from public sewers;
- repair flood damaged mains and handle flooding caused by bursts;
- manage the storage and release of flood water supply reservoirs.

Transport Scotland

<http://www.trafficscotland.org/>

Deal with motorway and trunk road closures: 0800 028 1414 (24 hour).

The Scottish Flood Forum

www.scottishfloodforum.org

Tel. 0131 563 9392 (Monday-Friday 9am-5pm)

Email admin@scottishfloodforum.org

Offers advice and information on a wide range of flooding issues, including flood resilience and recovery.