

## IMPORTANT FLOOD INFORMATION

### ADVICE FOR INDIVIDUALS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER A FLOOD

Birmingham City Council is working closely with other agencies and local communities and is committed to informing and preparing residents for emergencies. This leaflet provides essential advice and contact information for anyone who may experience flooding. Please take time to read the enclosed details and keep this booklet close at hand should you require it in the event of flooding in your area.

For copies of this leaflet and further information, including details of any local arrangements that may be in place, please email:

[emergencyplanning@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:emergencyplanning@birmingham.gov.uk), or phone 0121 303 4825

To find out more information on flooding and the flood risk in your area including the Environment Agency leaflets; Preparing for a Flood, During a Flood and After a Flood Leaflets, please contact the Environment Agency's Floodline on 0845 988 1188 or visit their website at: [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk).

#### **Birmingham City Council's Response to Flooding**

The information provided in this leaflet is primarily to provide individuals with useful advice and contacts before, during and after a flood event. There is a responsibility on citizens to take sensible precautions in order to be better prepared for flooding. However, it is also important for residents to understand the activities undertaken by the Council. A summary of Council activities is provided below.

#### **before:**

- ❖ working with agencies and communities to put effective arrangements in place;
- ❖ monitoring weather events by communicating with the Environment Agency and Met Office;
- ❖ checking and clearing drains in flood hot spots;
- ❖ additional street clearing to remove leaf litter and debris from roads.

#### **during:**

- ❖ open evacuation centres, where required;
- ❖ clear blocked drains and culverts;
- ❖ re-route traffic to avoid affected areas;
- ❖ where possible and dependant on stocks, distribute sandbags;
- ❖ provide public information via the Council Emergency Information Line (0121 303 1101).

#### **after:**

- ❖ distribute information to flooded residents and provide guidance and advice through advice and information officers;
- ❖ work with other agencies (utilities, Environment Agency) to support communities;
- ❖ provide short-term shelter to Council and Private residents and where required alternative long-term housing to Council residents.

Preparing for a Flood	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Find out if you can sign up to the Environment Agency 24 hour Floodline Warnings Direct service, call <b>Floodline 0845 988 1188</b> . You can select to receive river flood warnings by phone, text, email, fax or pager.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check your buildings and contents insurance policy covers you for a flood event.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep a separate list of useful telephone numbers to hand (this should include the Council, your insurance company and Floodline).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Find out where and how to turn off your Gas, Electricity and Water mains supplies.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare a <b>Flood kit</b> and include the following: Pack a small bag with essential belongings include warm clothes, torch (check batteries), radio (wind up or battery powered), food, water, other drink, mobile phone (pre input useful numbers), any medicines that you might need to take (and copy of your prescription), any important documents that you have and a first aid kit. Keep this bag easily accessible.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Store items of personal value such as photos in a safe place above potential flood levels i.e. upstairs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider what actions you may need to take in a flood event such as where you would want to move your car.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider purchasing <b>flood protection equipment</b> and other measures that can help stop flood water or reduce the damage to your property such as raising electrical sockets, airbrick covers and floodboards (which fix to frames around windows and doors). For advice on flood products go to National Flood Forum website <a href="http://www.floodforum.org.uk">www.floodforum.org.uk</a> .

When flooding is imminent	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep up to date with local radio for further information and announcements and via <b>Floodline 0845 988 1188</b> (phone this number to see if flood warnings for river flooding are available in your area).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Collect together personal belongings and essential telephone numbers including insurance and bank details. Keep these in a waterproof bag.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Move people, pets, valuables and sentimental items upstairs or in a high place downstairs. If possible, move electrical equipment and furniture upstairs. Any furniture that you cannot move upstairs, try to raise well off the floor.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that you switch off Gas and Electricity if flooding is imminent before evacuating.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Alert neighbours and assist the elderly, infirm and those with small children.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Where you have flood defence measures ensure these are fitted. Block doorways and air bricks. Consider buying your own sand and bags, or fill pillowcases and plastic bags with earth. When <b>laying sandbags</b> follow the following general advice (for more information contact Floodline): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stack sandbags like bricks in a wall by overlapping rows in doorways or over air bricks.</li> <li>• Lay sandbags with seams and bag mouths facing inwards, as this is where moisture enters the bags;</li> <li>• Shape the sandbags into rectangles before laying them;</li> <li>• Use half-filled sandbags to enable you to stagger joints;</li> <li>• Have the neck of the sandbags facing the same direction.</li> </ul> <b>Residents should not be dependant on Council sandbags as they maintain a very limited stock which is prioritised during flooding.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Put plugs in sinks and baths and weigh them down. If you do not have non-return valves fitted, plug water inlet pipes with towels and clothes and disconnect any equipment that uses water (e.g. washing machines and dishwashers).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check your <b>Flood kit</b> and keep this bag to hand.

During a flood	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep dry and out of floodwater if possible. Stay in your property, if safe to do so, until advised otherwise by the emergency services or until the floodwater has receded.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoid contact with floodwater as this may contain sewage. Wash any exposed skin before handling food or attending to wounds. Advise children not to play in floodwater.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoid walking and driving through floodwater, there could be hidden hazards and avoid flowing floodwater. If it is necessary to walk through shallow floodwater, wear sensible footwear taking care to avoid hidden holes, obstacles or other hazards. Do not walk on river banks, or cross bridges over torrential rivers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Continue to listen to situation updates on your local radio and via <b>Floodline 0845 988 1188</b> .

If evacuation becomes necessary	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stay calm and do not panic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Police officers and / or other officials will try to visit all properties at risk to advise on the requirement to evacuate.
<input type="checkbox"/>	If road conditions permit, move vehicles to unaffected areas and ask friends / family if you can share their parking facilities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	You will hear about your evacuation point for transport and the location of the emergency shelter either verbally or by a leaflet.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Try to check that any elderly / vulnerable family members or neighbours know about the evacuation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Listen to the advice of the authorities and follow any instructions to leave a property taking your flood kit with you.
<input type="checkbox"/>	When leaving ensure you leave your property secure.

After a flood / returning home	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact your insurers as soon as possible and follow their advice. Most insurers have a 24hr helpline. Do not throw away damaged goods until your insurer has authorised you to do so. It is a good idea to take photographs of the damage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Remember that the safety of electricity and gas must be checked before use. A qualified electrician needs to check any electrical equipment and circuits that have been exposed to floodwater.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoid contact with any remaining floodwater or items having had contact with floodwater unless wearing protective gloves / clothing. Health advice about cleaning up after flooding, including risks of infections, mould and coping without mains water is available on the Health Protection Agency website <a href="http://www.hpa.org.uk">www.hpa.org.uk</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Boil all tap water until it is declared safe by the water supply company
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wash yours and your children's hands frequently with bottled water if your supply has not been declared fit for use. Disinfect any children's toys.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dispose of any contaminated food, including tinned, defrosted, and packaged food that have been exposed to floodwater.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Seek medical assistance if any health issues appear, especially flu like symptoms.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ventilate your property whilst taking care of security.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do not throw rubbish and furniture outdoors; wait for an organised collection.
<input type="checkbox"/>	During these difficult times, bogus / cowboy builders / traders are frequently offering their services. Make sure that you get a written quotation that is on letter headed paper with a landline contact number and address.

**Key Contacts:**

Service/ Issue	Organisation	Contact Details	
		Daytime	Out of hours
In an emergency, i.e. threat to life	Fire/ Police/ Ambulance	999	
Fire related general enquiries of a non-emergency nature	Fire	0845 5000 900 (24hrs) <a href="http://www.wmfs.net">www.wmfs.net</a>	
General Policing enquiries	West Midlands Police	0845 113 5000	
Blocked highway drainage flooding	Birmingham City Council – Highways	0121 303 6644	0121 303 4149 <a href="http://www.birmingham.gov.uk">www.birmingham.gov.uk</a>
To report flooding to property	Birmingham City Council	0121 303 4149	
Flooding to Council Properties	Birmingham City Council – Council Housing Repair	08000 733 333	
Request sandbags (subject to availability), Reporting blockages/debris in small watercourses and culverts	Birmingham City Council - Highways	0121 303 7235	0121 303 4149
Careline support services for older people and the vulnerable	Birmingham City Council - Careline	0121 303 3826 / 0121 675 1562	
Flooding on motorways	Highways Agency	0870 066 0115 <a href="http://www.highways.gov.uk">www.highways.gov.uk</a>	
General advice on responding to flooding and Flood Warnings	Environment Agency – Floodline	0845 988 1188 <a href="http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk">www.environment-agency.gov.uk</a>	
Report blockages/ debris in Main River and fly tipping of industrial waste or into the river	Environment Agency	0800 80 70 60	0800 80 70 60
Sewerage, water services and emergencies (inc. leakline)	Severn Trent Water	0800 783 4444 <a href="http://www.stwater.co.uk">www.stwater.co.uk</a>	
	South Staffs Water (water supply - Sutton Coldfield only)	0800 389 10 11 <a href="http://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk">www.south-staffs-water.co.uk</a>	
	Transco	0800 111 999	
Gas emergency	Central Networks	0800 328 1111	
Electricity emergency	NHS Direct	0845 4647	
If you are feeling unwell, for nurse advice or health information			

**Other Useful Contacts:**

Service/ Issue	Organisation	Contact Details	
		Daytime	Out of hours
General Council services	Birmingham City Council - Switchboard	0121 303 9944 (office hours only)	
Report river pollution	Environment Agency	0800 80 70 60	
Dangerous trees on City Council land (schools/parks/street etc)	Birmingham City Council – Grounds Maintenance	0121 464 8728	0121 303 4149
Dangerous trees on private land	Birmingham City Council - Public Health	0121 303 6007	0121 303 4149
Public health issues and pest control	Birmingham City Council – Public Health	0121 303 6007	0121 303 4149
Advice on blocked private drains and sewers	Birmingham City Council - Public Health	0121 303 6007	0121 303 4149
Disposal of bulky items (6 items or less)	Birmingham City Council – Fleet and Waste Management	0121 303 1112 (8am – 6pm Mon – Fri / 8am – 4.30pm Sat and Sun)	
To report fly tipping on land	Birmingham City Council – Public Health	0121 303 6007 (office hours only)	
Stray dogs and animal welfare	Birmingham City Council – Public Health	0121 303 9900	07500 55300 (9am to 4pm - Sat and Sun)
Animal care/ emergencies	RSPCA	0300 123 4999 <a href="http://www.rspca.org.uk">www.rspca.org.uk</a>	
Flood advice and support for community groups	National Flood Forum	01299 403 055	N/A <a href="http://www.floodforum.org.uk">www.floodforum.org.uk</a>
Council Tax/ Business Rates	Birmingham City Council – Finance	0121 303 1113/ 0121 303 5509 (office hours only)	
Insurance/money matters	Citizens Advice Bureau	0121 687 5379 (office hours only)	
Benefit advice/ compensation claims/ dept counselling/social fund loans and grants etc.	Birmingham City Council – switchboard to ask for your local Neighbourhood Office	0121 303 9944 (office hours only)	