



UK Health  
Security  
Agency

# What to do after a flood

## Easy Read booklet



# What this booklet is about



This booklet is about how to stay safe and well after a flood.



- How and why flood water can damage your health.



- How to clean up your home, as safely as possible.



- Looking after yourself, your family and your neighbours.

# Flooding and health



Flooding can cause injuries and other health problems.



Flood water often contains chemicals and germs. They can cause skin problems and gut infections.



Mould and damp in your home after a flood can cause breathing problems.



The biggest problem can be mental health. Experiencing a flood can make people anxious and depressed.

# Cleaning up after a flood



Be careful when you are cleaning up! Flood water is not clean. It can make you unwell.



Protect yourself from the flood water using:

- rubber boots
- overalls or a plastic apron
- waterproof gloves
- face mask
- goggles



Wash your hands with soap and warm water after each cleaning session.

# Cleaning up after a flood



Use hot water and detergent to clean everything that has touched flood water.



Wash clothes, bedding and soft toys at 60°C. Use a launderette until your waste-water system has been checked.



Clean everything in your kitchen. Throw away wooden spoons and chopping boards.



Be careful of sharp objects which may be hidden under water.

# Electricity and gas



Do not turn on appliances that use electricity or gas if they are wet.



For example, your cooker, heaters, boiler, TV, phone chargers and computers.



Ask a qualified person like a plumber or electrician to come and check things for you.

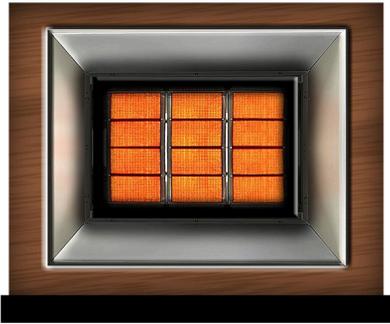


When your appliances have been checked, you can turn them back on.

# Drying your home



Once the water and any dirt or mud is gone, you will need to dry out your home.



Use heaters, dehumidifiers and open the windows.



Never put petrol or diesel generators inside your home. The fumes are very dangerous.



If you have radiators, get your heating system checked before you turn them on.

# Getting practical help



If you have home insurance, contact your insurance company as soon as you can.



Contact the National Flood Forum:

<https://nationalfloodforum.org.uk>

**Phone:** 01299 403 055



Call your local Council for help.



Work with your neighbours and other community groups to help each other.

# Mental health



A flood is a very stressful thing to experience. It is normal to feel tired, stressed and anxious.



Cleaning up is hard work. You might also have to move home. It is important to look after yourself whilst you do these things.



Remember to:

- ask for help from family, friends and neighbours
- rest and sleep as much you can
- eat regularly, and eat healthy food
- get some exercise



# Helping other people



Family, friends and community groups can work together to support each other after a flood.



If you help someone who has been affected by a flood, check these things:

- Ask about their physical health. For example, injury or illness.

Call **999** in an emergency, or 111 for non-urgent advice.



- Help them to contact friends and family.

- Ask if they have food, water, medication and somewhere to sleep.



- Listen carefully. Help them plan what to do next.

# Useful links



## National Flood Forum

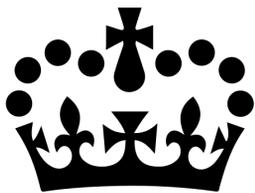
<https://nationalfloodforum.org.uk>



## NHS Better Health

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/>

NHS 111: phone 111 or [visit website](#)



GOV.UK

## The Samaritans

Phone: 116 123

GOV.UK: [flood warnings](#)

Age UK: [prepare for a flood](#)



## British Red Cross:

[how to prepare for floods](#)