

## Advice on flooding for communities and constituents – South Derbyshire District Council

As we move into the autumn / winter season, our residents may well start become concerned about the risk of possible flooding.

The risk of **flooding from rivers** (called ‘fluvial’ floods) is mainly controlled by the Environment Agency. They publish on-line flood risk maps which are continuously being updated - <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/warnings>. This website should be the first point of reference for anyone worried about a risk of flooding from rivers or they should use the Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or follow @EnvAgency on Twitter for the latest flood updates.

Flooding events from rainwater runoff (called ‘pluvial’ floods) are caused by high volumes of rainfall in a short period exceeding the ability of the local drainage systems to cope with it. Predicting where and when pluvial events will take place is much more difficult than predicting fluvial events.

In some instances if a property is at imminent risk of **flooding from the highway** then Derbyshire County Council reactive teams may be able to provide filled sandbags. In these cases calls should be made to the County Council on 01629 533190.

*The District Council has no legal duties to deal with flooding incidents, but we will try to help if and when we can.*

When we become aware of potential flood events **not caused by flooding from the highway** then we ask for volunteers, usually from our Operational Services and Environmental Services teams to be available to deliver sandbags to properties at highest risk of being adversely affected. Any requests for sandbags need to be assessed based on how close residential parts of the property are to being flooded and whether there are infants, elderly, frail or disabled people living at the property. We can't deal with gardens, garages or outbuildings being flooded.

Where there is an **imminent risk** then we will try to deliver the number of sandbags necessary for the property to protect only its external doors and any airbricks in external walls. The delivery of these sandbags is dependant on whether the property can be reached through the floods via the local road network and whether we have adequate supplies of sandbags and personnel to deliver them.

At times like these lots of people understandably want lots of help, but there is a limit to what we can practically provide and so we must manage people's expectations.

Requests for sandbags can be made by phone to the Contact Centre on 01283 595865 or at night via Careline on 01283 221225.

***However, there is a huge amount that your constituents can do to help themselves prepare for flooding events.*** Here's some advice you can give to worried constituents about how they can take some control of the situation:

### Stay Informed

- Stay up to date with current flood warnings and weather warnings at <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/warnings> and <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/uk-warnings#?date=2020-02-17>. Both of these services have text alert options.
- Keep up to date with local media news reports.

### **Be prepared**

- Put vital items like insurance documents and medications in a waterproof bag in case you need to leave your home
- Check you know how to turn off your gas, electricity and water mains supplies. If water starts coming into the property, turn off the power to the downstairs at the fusebox.
- Take essentials upstairs – food, water, torch. Move children, pets and valuables upstairs. If you can, move furniture and furnishings upstairs.
- Move your vehicle to higher ground if it's safe to do so.
- You can make temporary flood defences by filling plastic bags or even pillowcases with soil or compost and placing them in front of doors and airbricks.
- Block up external airbricks. You could use any sort of solid sheet such as plyboard or rigid plastic securely fastened to the external wall.
- If you have time, take photos in case you need to make an insurance claim.

### **Stay Safe**

- Keep an eye on neighbours. Be ready to help if you can.
- Call 999 if you're in immediate danger, particularly if there is anyone frail, vulnerable or disabled in the property.
- Follow advice from the emergency services and evacuate if you're told to do so.
- Avoid driving or walking through flood water: just 30cm (1 foot) of fast flowing water could move your car and even shallow moving water can knock you off your feet
- Keep family and pets away from floodwater – it probably contains sewage and chemicals and may contain heavy debris, sharp objects and invisible open manhole covers
- Wash your hands if you've been in contact with flood water which may contain toxic substances