

# Flooding in Calderdale



This leaflet is provided to give advice on how to prepare in advance, what to do and who to contact if flooding occurs, and who is responsible for taking action



# Flooding in Calderdale

Flooding is becoming increasingly common in Calderdale.

The Borough has seen a number of damaging floods in the last 30 years including those that created national headlines in 2012, 2013 and 2015.

Whilst flooding close to main rivers can be predicted, surface water flooding, flooding from canals and flooding from smaller watercourses, blocked culverts and road drainage often occur unexpectedly but can be significant.

The Council has an important new role to play in managing flood risk throughout Calderdale in its designation as Lead Local Flood Authority.

## Are you at risk of river flooding?

Visit [www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk](http://www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk) to check if your property or business is in a river flood risk area.

It could save you money, help you protect yourself and your property, maybe even save your life.

Even if your home or business is not directly at risk of flooding from rivers you could still be affected by surface water flooding (rainfall running off land and hard surfaces).

# Sign up for flood warnings



At present general warnings that flooding may occur come from the Met Office and specific warnings about river flooding within identified at risk areas from the Environment Agency's Flood Information Service.

Visit [www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk](http://www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk) or contact **Floodline** on **0345 988 1188** to see if you are in a flood warning area and eligible to receive the following warnings:



**FLOOD ALERT**

**Flooding is possible, be prepared**



**FLOOD WARNING**

**Flooding is expected, immediate action required**



**SEVERE FLOOD WARNING**

**Severe flooding, danger to life**



**Insufficient private road drainage combined with a heavy downpour**

These warnings relate to river flooding only. There is no specific warning system for surface water flooding. It is mainly caused by very intense rainfall and can be extremely localised, making it very hard to predict.

Quite often local knowledge and experience are the best indicators of when flooding may occur to your property and when to take action.



# Climate Change

Because of climate change we are experiencing more frequent, very heavy downpours which put stress on all drainage systems.

This increases the risk of flooding by overwhelming drainage systems in all areas, not just in the valley bottoms.

## What should you do if flooding occurs?

Take a few simple precautions during flooding to help minimise the impact on you and your family:

- Listen to local radio and TV for warnings and advice.
- Move furniture and valuables upstairs if you can.
- Roll up carpets and rugs and move them out of harm's way.
- Put plugs in downstairs sinks, baths and toilets and weigh them down.
- Bring outdoor pets indoors and upstairs where possible.
- Have an evacuation pack ready with essential items i.e. medication, important documents including insurance, baby items etc.
- Turn off gas and electricity when flooding begins.
- Evacuate if asked to do so by the emergency services.
- If flooding does occur do not walk or drive through water as open manholes or other dangers may be hidden.
- **Keep yourself safe; dial 999 if your life or health is at risk.**

# How can you prepare for flooding?



Long term preparation can help protect your home and possessions against flooding.

- Board your loft to make space for possessions above flood levels - very useful in a bungalow.
- Invest in flood protection products that can be fitted to doorways and air bricks for the duration of the flood risk period.
- Install new electrical sockets as high as possible above anticipated water levels. Put new boilers etc. on the first floor.
- The best way to protect yourself from flooding is to know what to do in advance. You can download a simple flood plan by visiting <https://floodsdestroy.campaign.gov.uk>
- If you are not in a river flooding area but think you might be vulnerable to surface water flooding, the Council's drainage engineers may be able to give advice. Ring **01422 288002**.

## What will the Council do in a flooding incident?

The Council works with the Emergency Services and the Environment Agency to co-ordinate responses during severe flooding. We also:

- Provide advice to the public about the incident and what to do.
- When required, set up rest centres for people evacuated from their homes who have nowhere else to go.
- Deal with road closures and diversion routes.
- Assist in the welfare of known vulnerable people.
- Monitor sensitive grids, screens and gullies in an attempt to keep them running free.
- If your property is at serious risk and the Council has available resources we will try to give assistance.



# Where do flooding responsibilities lie?

The **Environment Agency (EA)** has an over-arching role nationally plus duties and powers in relation to main rivers.

The Council as **Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)** in its area has responsibilities including co-ordinating flood management activities plus powers and duties in respect of non-main rivers.

## Watercourse Flooding

Watercourses (including main rivers) are normally the responsibility of the owner of the land through which they flow, in open channel or in pipes and culverts. These are known as 'riparian owners' – the owners of the banks – and may be individuals or organisations.



The Council may require riparian owners to act to clear blocked or defective watercourses when necessary and also has power to do the work itself and re-charge its costs.

## Surface Water Flooding

Heavy downpours produce more water than collecting systems can reasonably handle. In addition leaves and litter on the surface tend to block road gullies very quickly during severe weather. This often leads to localised flooding which cannot easily be prevented.

## Highway Flooding

The Council as Highway Authority makes provision for draining the highway effectively over a limited range of rainfall conditions.

## Sewer Flooding

Yorkshire Water has a duty to drain sewage flows from domestic and commercial premises and treat the effluent.

# Property owner's responsibilities



If your property floods it could be for a number of reasons. You are responsible for maintaining private water pipes and private drainage systems but it is likely that any serious flooding would actually be caused by one of the four main types opposite. You are, however, advised to take reasonable steps to protect your property from **known** risks of these types of flooding.

## What else is the Council doing?

The Council's Local Risk Management Strategy sets out the main risks and appropriate courses of action to help understand and manage flood risk. This is delivered in partnership with other agencies via the Calderdale Flood Recovery and Resilience Programme.

Its key responsibilities include developing and maintaining a flood risk asset register, investigating incidents of local flooding, consulting on planning applications that have drainage implications and supporting natural flood management and flood alleviation schemes.



## Property level resilience



Measures that may assist in the event of a flood include barriers, pumps, drain sealers, sandbags and anti-flood air bricks. The Council does not make sandbags available to the public but holds stocks for use where there is significant risk of flooding from the highway.

The National Flood Forum offers free independent advice on property level resilience.

## Useful Contacts

If you are concerned about river flooding or would like help in preparing a personal flood plan please visit <https://floodsdestroy.campaign.gov.uk> or [www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk](http://www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk). To keep up to date with the latest flood updates, call Floodline on **0345 988 1188** or follow **@EnvAgency** and **#floodaware** on Twitter.

If you would like information about evacuation and preparing for emergencies please contact the Council's Emergency Planning Team by ringing **01422 288001** or by email to **emergencyplanning@calderdale.gov.uk**

More information can be found on the Council's website at [www.calderdale.gov.uk/flooding](http://www.calderdale.gov.uk/flooding) and community website [www.eyeoncalderdale.com](http://www.eyeoncalderdale.com)

To report flooding please contact the appropriate number below:

**River flooding > Environment Agency Floodline**

**0345 988 1188**

**Sewer or water main flooding > Yorkshire Water**

**0345 124 2424**

**Flooding of highways & streams > Calderdale Council**

**01422 288002**

**or email [customer.first@calderdale.gov.uk](mailto:customer.first@calderdale.gov.uk)**

**Canal flooding (emergencies only) > Canal & River Trust**

**0800 479 9947**

**If you believe there is real and  
imminent risk to your life ring **999****