



sewage flooding advice

**anglianwater**



**Flooding from the public sewer (whether foul or surface water, internal or external) is something that we try very hard to prevent but unfortunately it can still happen.**



Sewers are designed to accommodate a given flow based on standard engineering design figures, but we cannot restrict the volume of domestic sewage legally discharged by any person. In exceptional circumstances, rainfall can also result in the sewers overflowing causing flooding of the surrounding areas.



If your property has been affected by sewage flooding, please report it to us immediately by calling our 24-hour emergency number **08457 145 145**.

In line with our Charter for Domestic Customers, we will respond to reports of internal sewage flooding within four hours of being notified. It is our policy to contact you within 24 hours of being notified of external sewage flooding.

Once the flooding has subsided, we aim to provide free assistance by:

- removing excess liquid and any solids left behind
- washing down and disinfecting the affected area

It should be noted, however, that no liability can be accepted at this stage. Any assistance, which is offered, will be given without prejudice. Regardless of liability, we would advise you to make sure your home insurance policy adequately protects you from damage of this kind.



## how can Anglian Water help

## some other useful advice



### cleaning up

First contact your insurance company for their help and advice. Then make a list of all damaged goods, including food and take photographs and videos to help with your insurance claim.

If you start to clean up, make sure you wear protective clothing such as rubber gloves and wash hands after exposure.

Remove all soft furnishings that are damaged beyond repair (NB: ensure loss adjusters have finished surveying the site before disposal). If you attempt to salvage soft furnishings, leave them to dry out, then vacuum.

Whilst Anglian Water will help to remove any excess liquid and debris from the flooding, any items that are heavily soiled and can be claimed for on your insurance should be placed outside to prevent the spread of bacteria.

Wash down all hard surfaces with a mild detergent/disinfectant (following manufacturers' instructions) several times until visibly clean. Food preparation surfaces should be washed down with a food-safe disinfectant, such as Dettol, including the refrigerator.

All crockery, pots and pans should be washed thoroughly in hot, soapy water. If any are chipped or damaged please discard them.

Clothing, bedding and soft articles should be laundered on a hot wash (60°C and above). Items that cannot be washed in a machine need to be professionally cleaned or disposed of.

Allow everything to thoroughly dry – this will help destroy germs. Moderate heating in conjunction with good ventilation can help the drying out process.



### after the clean up

We will provide you with a letter of explanation about the cause of the flooding within 10 working days if asked. However, if we have to carry out an investigation into the flooding, we will keep you informed of our progress on a quarterly basis until we have completed our work.

If flooding from the public sewer affects your property internally, we will automatically refund your sewerage bill for each internal flooding incident up to a maximum payment of £1,000 for each incident.

We will also consider any additional expenses where flooding is proved to be our fault. These claims can be made up to 12 months after the event.

We will consider providing temporary accommodation if your property has become uninhabitable as a result of our negligence.

A payment made in accordance with our Charter for Domestic Customers does not constitute an admission of responsibility for the flooding.

Please note: our guarantees do not apply if we are prevented from meeting our standards by third party actions or exceptional circumstances such as severe weather conditions.

## some other useful advice



### health and safety

Make sure you cover cuts and wounds with a waterproof plaster.

Put contaminated food, including tins, into refuse sacks for collection, but check your home contents insurance before their final disposal.

Don't eat garden or allotment products that have been contaminated.

Take particular care when preparing food. Always wash your hands before starting and keep any open food in a sealed container.

If you feel unwell or have any symptoms, such as diarrhoea or sickness after the flood, call your doctor immediately and explain the circumstances.

If you accidentally swallow any contaminated material, please contact your doctor immediately.

Ensure the property is well ventilated - but remember security!

Do not use any gas or electrical appliances that may have been affected by flooding until a competent CORGI gas fitter or electrician has checked them.

Where private gardens have been flooded, it is recommended that children and (where possible) pets should be kept off any treated area for at least the follow periods:

- disinfected paved areas: **24 hours**
- lawns and soil areas: **12 days** (please note that this period will increase to a minimum of 25 days during the winter months)

Your local Environmental Health Officer and district council will also be available to assist you by providing impartial advice.

## responsibilities of other agencies



**County Councils** – blocked highway drains and road gullies can sometimes cause surface water flooding. They are the responsibility of the Highways Authority. You can find a contact number for your County Councils Highways department in a local telephone directory.

**Environment Agency** – Advice and valuable information on how to be prepared for general flooding can be obtained by calling their 'Floodline' number on **0845 988 1188** and requesting a copy of their 'Floodline' Pack.



### further help

Please talk to us first if you have any concerns about our response to a sewage flooding incident.

If you remain unhappy with our reply, you can contact the Consumer Council for Water (Eastern), details are given below. The Consumer Council is the regional, independent, consumer organisation set up to look after the interests of water and wastewater customers.

They are based at: Ground Floor, Carlyle House, Carlyle Road, Cambridge CB4 3DN.

Telephone: **01223 323 889** or **08457 959 369**

Fax: **01223 323 930**

Email: **eastern@ccwater.org.uk**

The Consumer Council for Water (Eastern) will respond to your complaint within 5 working days, setting out details of any possible further assistance in resolving the matter.

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