

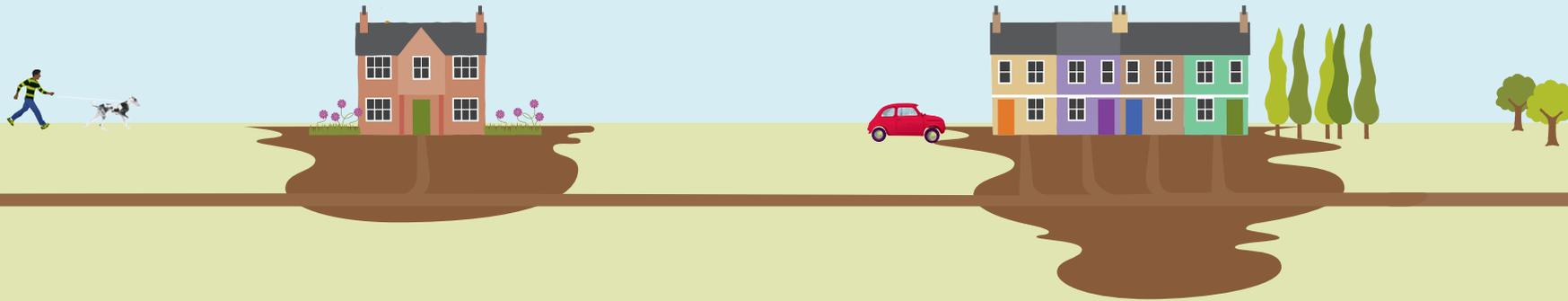
USEFUL NUMBERS AND CONTACTS

.....
Environment Agency
0800 807 060
.....

.....
Anglian Water
03457 145 145
.....

.....
Local Authority
Contact your own local
authority directly for
more information.
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DEALING WITH FLOODING FROM SEWERS



DEALING WITH FLOODING FROM SEWERS



Sewer flooding can be an unpleasant and upsetting experience. We work very hard to stop any flooding from our sewers, but it can happen for a variety of reasons. This leaflet explains what to do if it happens to you, looks at the possible causes of such flooding and whether anyone is responsible.

FACT

Most sewer blockages are caused by a build-up of fat, oil, grease, sanitary products and wipes.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'VE BEEN FLOODED

1. Call our 24 hour helpline **03457 145 145** if your property has been affected by flooding from sewers.

We can then investigate the cause of the flooding to see if it happened because of our equipment and if anything can be done to stop it from happening again.

2. Contact your insurance company. Regardless of the reason for the flooding, your insurance company are best placed to help you.

They can quickly:

- Arrange for the clean up and drying of your property
- Offer advice and guidance on making a claim for any loss or damage
- Find alternative accommodation if necessary

A thorough investigation can take several months, that is why it is so important that you contact your insurer so that you can get the rapid clean-up you need.

Remember, if you don't tell your insurer about something like sewer flooding it could invalidate your policy.

NOT INSURED?

We strongly advise all customers to get building and contents insurance and to make sure their policy covers damage from sewer flooding. If you don't have insurance to cover this kind of event, then Anglian Water can offer some limited help.

INTERNAL FLOODING

If your property has internal flooding, we will respond as soon as possible once we're informed. It can take longer if we are prevented from reaching you by exceptional circumstances such as severe weather. We'll investigate the cause and work with you to decide the best way to clean things up.

AFTER VISITING YOU, WE WILL ARRANGE A CLEAN-UP TO:

- Remove excess liquid and any solids left behind
- Wash down and disinfect external areas like tiled floors and footpaths.

We won't:

- Dry out your property
- Replace any contents
- Provide alternative accommodation
- Pay compensation for loss or damage to your contents or property.

EXTERNAL FLOODING

If your property has external flooding, we will get to you as quickly as we can, but have to prioritise those customers in greatest need, such as those with internal flooding.

CLEANING UP

If you decide to begin the clean-up, cover any cuts and wounds with a waterproof plaster and wear protective clothing, including rubber gloves. Afterwards, be sure to thoroughly wash your hands.

Make sure loss adjusters appointed by your insurance company have completed their survey before you dispose of anything.

INTERNAL FLOODING

Soft furnishings: Put these outside, along with items that are heavily soiled or ruined. This prevents bacteria spreading. Soft furnishings should be professionally cleaned or thrown away.

Hard surfaces: Wash several times with mild detergents or disinfectants until visibly clean, following the manufacturers' instructions. Don't dry your surfaces immediately as this makes the cleaning products less effective. Food preparation surfaces, including your fridge, should be washed with a food-safe disinfectant.

Crockery, pots and pans: Wash thoroughly in hot, soapy water. Throw out anything that's chipped or damaged.

Clothes, bedding and soft articles: Put these in a hot wash (60°C or above). Things that can't be machine washed need to be professionally cleaned or thrown out. Allow everything to dry thoroughly as this will help destroy germs. Moderate (but not excessive) heating, combined with good ventilation, can help.

You can call our 24 hour helpline on 03457 145 145

It's important to understand that any help we give is *without prejudice*. This means we don't accept liability at the time of the sewer flooding and may need to investigate the cause.



CLEANING UP

STAYING HEALTHY AND SAFE



EXTERNAL FLOODING

You can ask us for free help to remove leftover liquid and solids after the flooding subsides. It's best to leave areas to dry before completing the clean up.

The UV rays of the sun will destroy bacteria on your garden and lawn. This can take up to a month, and disturbing the soil can prolong the process. So don't work in the garden or allow children and pets on the affected area.

There's no need to remove your soil or plants, though any food crops that have been soaked with wastewater should be destroyed. Your paths and driveways also need to be washed down and disinfected.

Until things get back to normal, take care to:

Wash your hands thoroughly if they come into contact with the flooded area.

Get rid of contaminated food, including cans. Don't eat contaminated crops from your garden or allotment.

Take extra care when preparing food. Always wash your hands and store opened food in a sealed container.

Avoid using affected gas and electrical appliances until a qualified gas fitter or electrician has checked they're safe.

Make sure your property is safe and secure if you're opening doors and windows for ventilation.

If you feel unwell, accidentally swallow any contaminated material, or have any symptoms such as diarrhoea or sickness after the flood, **call your doctor immediately.**

WHO LOOKS AFTER WHAT?

Although it is often interconnected, our region's network of drains and sewers is managed and maintained by a number of different organisations and agencies. A list of contact numbers can be found on the back of this leaflet.

1
You...
are responsible for sewers on your property that serve only your property.

2
Anglian Water...
is responsible for all other sewers, including any pipes you share with your neighbours and some surface water pipes, which take rainwater away from your home.

3
Lead Local Flood Authorities
The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 made County Councils and Unitary Authorities the Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) for their area. They are responsible for preparing and maintaining a plan for dealing with the risks of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. They do this in consultation with all the agencies and organisations listed here, including members of the public. They also have to investigate any significant flooding incidents and publish the results.

4
The Environment Agency...
deals with flooding from rivers and the sea and is responsible for the flood defences that protect against this. The local council may also have responsibility for some smaller rivers.

5
Highways Agency...
is responsible for surface water pipes which take rainwater from roads, pavements and road gullies.

6
Individual landowners and Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs)...
are responsible for maintaining the land drains that channel away excess water from farmland. The IDBs are also responsible for managing water levels in low lying areas like the Fens.

WHAT CAUSES SEWER FLOODING?

Anglian Water works very hard to keep its sewers and equipment in good working order. The pipes are built to take much higher flows than they would in normal conditions. They are also built to be self cleaning so the sewage can keep flowing.

SO WHY DO THINGS GO WRONG?

There may be a problem with the pipes, a blockage for example, or with the pumps that move sewage through them. If the flooding has been caused or made worse by something like this then we may need to investigate to fully understand the cause and responsibility.

However, if our pumping station or another part of our network has failed, this does not necessarily mean we are at fault or liable. Anglian Water isn't always able to control what gets into, or is put into, our sewers which can cause problems later down the line, such as fats and wipes, third party damage and being inundated with rainwater.

WHAT WE WILL PAY HOUSEHOLD CUSTOMERS

If flooding from the public sewer affects your property **internally**, we will:

- Automatically refund your annual sewerage bill for each internal flooding incident. This will be a minimum of £150 and up to a maximum of £1,000 for each incident.

This does not apply to flooding because of extreme weather, see opposite page for details. It also does not apply to some other circumstances such as industrial action or third party interference with the network.

If flooding from the public sewer materially affects your property **externally**:

- You may be entitled to claim 50% of your annual sewerage charges from a minimum of £75, up to a maximum of £500.

This does not apply to flooding because of extreme weather, see page opposite for details. It also does not apply to some other circumstances such as industrial action or third party interference with the network.

Please call us within three months of the flooding to let us know if you've been affected by external flooding and would like us to investigate your claim.

If asked, we will provide you with a letter of explanation about the cause of flooding within 10 working days. If we are carrying out an investigation into sewer flooding that has affected you, we'll keep you up to speed with its progress. A payment made in

accordance with the Guaranteed Service Standards which are laid out in Section 8 of our Codes of Practice doesn't constitute an admission of responsibility for the flooding. You can find a copy of our Codes of Practice on our website anglianwater.co.uk/codesofpractice

PAYMENTS FOR NON HOUSEHOLD CUSTOMERS

We advise non household customers to speak to their retailer. They will be able to provide you with any information and details of payments you may be entitled to receive.

SEWER FLOODING CAN ALSO HAPPEN FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS BEYOND OUR CONTROL

- Pipes can become blocked, especially when people put things like cooking fats, wipes and other items down the drain when they should be placed in the bin.

- Extreme weather, including periods of intense rainfall, prolonged periods of rain or snowmelt, can sometimes overwhelm sewers, as they are unable to carry the extra water away quickly enough.
- At times of flood, river banks may burst, rising river levels can stop sewer outflows from working properly and flood water can get into the sewers from other sources. All of this can push sewage back up the pipes and cause them to surcharge.

In these circumstances we are not liable for any problems caused by the flooding, though we can offer some limited help to clean-up.

Whatever the cause of the flooding, **call your insurance company first**. They can help you put things right and, if an investigation shows someone is liable, they may seek to recover their costs.

