

# HOUSEHOLD FLOOD PLAN

## INTRODUCTION

Flooding can happen quickly and often when you least expect it. It can be a devastating and traumatic experience. Having a flood plan for your household can reduce your stress and help you to remember key facts when the worst happens. If you know you are at risk prepare NOW before it floods. Follow these easy steps to create your own household plan so that you and your family are more informed and better prepared.

Keep your flood plan close to hand and visible – for example on a pin board. Make sure everyone in the household knows where it is and update it when your circumstances change.

Taking measures to protect your property from flooding will limit the distress and damage caused by flooding. Flood protection products will prevent your home from flooding but only to a certain limit – once floodwaters exceed approximately 1 meter in height it is better to allow the floodwater into the house otherwise the floodwater could cause long-term structural damage. For this reason, it is advisable to have a flood plan ready even if you have fitted flood protection measures to your home.

One plan cannot fit all circumstances. This plan is a guide to help you think of your particular household's circumstances. Not everything in this plan might be relevant to you. Blank spaces have been left at the end of each section to allow you to write in other actions that are specific to you.

## CHECK LIST - WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Complete this flood plan.
- Make sure you have adequate insurance and understand your policy. Clarify with your insurer that you are covered in a flood event for damage and contents. Discuss with your neighbours or community group what type of insurance they have. Inform your insurance company what flood protection measures you have taken if you are in a flood risk area and also inform them if you are part of a flood resilience group – there may be an allowance for this.
- Make a list of phone numbers you may need (there is space at the end of this form to list them). Ask a friend or family member to be your emergency contact. This needs to be someone who does not live with you or in a flood risk area. In the event of a flood, each member of the household can phone the emergency contact number and let them know where they are and that they're ok. The

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emergency contact will then be able to pass this information on as needed. Make sure all members of your family have the emergency number stored in their mobile phone and/or memorised.

- Make up and have ready an emergency flood kit (known also as a 'grab bag'). The flood kit should include items such as waterproof clothing and boots, rubber gloves, prescribed medication and any repeat prescriptions if required, first aid kit, bottled water, food/energy bars, camera, torch with fully charged batteries, portable radio, high viz vests, money/bank cards, spare keys etc.
- If there is an infant in the house a separate flood kit is advisable and should include warm clothing, milk, baby food, sterilised bottles and spoons, nappies, wipes, nappy bags, comforter, a favourite toy etc.
- Find out how to switch off gas, electricity and water supply. Label switches/valves clearly. Practice switching them off and on in daylight and also in the dark. Make sure everyone in the house is able to do this.
- Put important documents in a sealed plastic bag in a safe place upstairs. This should include passports, insurance documents, wills, marriage/birth/death certificates, property deeds, receipts etc.
- Do the same with sentimental and precious items such as photographs, videos, gifts, momentous etc.
- Consider using a designated upstairs room to store items and to put items into in an emergency.
- Take a detailed list of valuable household items and include make, model and serial numbers. Take photographs of the items.
- Purchase suitable flood protection products such as door barriers, air vent covers, non return valves/flaps etc. Seal up any cracks and holes where pipes and cables are positioned in the walls. If there are manhole covers within the house they ideally should be sealed and bolted down. It is important to only purchase products that are certified to have been checked and tested – the most common certification is the BSI Kitemark. Alternatively, if you are handy or you know someone who is, it may be possible to make your own flood barriers for example using sheets of plywood or similar and a sealant, however these are unlikely to be as effective as the manufactured products. More information on flood protection products can be found in the flood protection guide available on [www.dublincity.ie/floodprotection](http://www.dublincity.ie/floodprotection)
- Practice fitting your flood protection products regularly so you will know how to do it in the event of an actual flood. Flood protection barriers are only effective when they are fitted correctly.
- Fit or have fitted by a suitably qualified electrician an outdoor electrical socket in an area where it would be unlikely to be affected by a flood, preferably more than one metre above ground level. This may be useful if you needed to pump water. The socket should have its electrical supply taken from the upstairs circuit because you may need to switch off the downstairs electrical circuit if water is entering your house.



## CHECK LIST - IF YOU ARE ABOUT TO FLOOD

You should co-operate fully with emergency services and keep in contact with your neighbours and community group. Always prioritise the safety of the people in the household over possessions. If there are other adults at home, decide who is going to do what. Plan beforehand how you would cope if you were on your own. Keep tuned to a local radio station and communicate with your neighbours and people that you have included in your emergency contact numbers list.

- Put your household plan into action.
- Fit any flood protection products you have.
- Gather together your previously prepared flood kit(s).
- Move as many items as you can upstairs and elevate off the ground any other items you can.
- Put stoppers or bungs in ground floor or basement toilets, sinks, baths and showers and weigh them down. If you have non-return valves/flaps fitted to waste outlet pipes, do not operate taps, shower, toilet, washing machine or dish washer because the waste water has no outlet while the valve is shut.
- Move your car(s) if it is safe to do so.
- Switch off the gas supply if you are advised by your gas supplier or there is any chance that water may enter the gas burner or appliances (eg. gas fire, cooker etc.). It is not safe to have a gas fire on if you have blocked your air vent.
- Switch off your electricity supply at the main fuse board if you are advised by your electric supplier. If you have checked in advance with a suitably qualified electrician that it is safe to do so, switch off the electricity to the basement and/or ground floor levels while keeping the electricity to the upper floors switched on.
- If you have time, you may consider doing the following if relevant:
  - Put sofas on bricks, crates or blocks and pile furniture on top safely
  - Move contents out of lower cupboards
  - Move rugs and mats upstairs
  - Fold curtains in half in situ and tie securely with string
  - In the garage/shed – hang up or place up high cycles, buggies, mechanical and electrical items
  - In the garden, weigh down pot plants and any items that may float in a flood
  - Cover fish ponds with netting to save fish

