

PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES





What you need to know and what you can do to help yourself in advance

Please keep this booklet in a safe place. It contains important information and advice on what to do in an emergency and how you and your family can be prepared.



Why do I need this booklet?

Emergencies come in many forms and often with little, if any warning. These can range from transport or industrial accidents through to utilities failures or severe weather events.

Thankfully, these events are rare, and the emergency services and local government have tried and tested plans in place to minimise the impacts when they happen.

However, there could be times when you need to look after yourself and your family until further assistance arrives. This booklet will give you some practical ideas to help keep you and your family safe.



What should I do in an emergency?

Common sense and your instincts will usually tell you what to do.

Remember to **tell the emergency services by phoning 999** – don't assume that someone else will do it.

The emergency services can gauge the severity of an incident from the number of calls that they receive.

Providing the emergency services with as much information as possible will help them decide on the size of their response. If you can, let them know:

- What has happened
- What is happening now
- Where it has happened
- How many people are involved
- How large an area is involved
- If anyone is injured
- Anything else you think they should know

Don't put yourself or others in danger.

Try to remain calm and check for injuries – remember to help yourself before trying to help others.

Follow the advice of the emergency services.



Should I stay indoors or evacuate?

If you think you might be in danger from something outside then:

GO IN:

Go inside a safe building

STAY IN:

Stay inside until you are advised to do otherwise

TUNE IN:

Tune in to local radio, TV or the council website for information

If the danger is inside (e.g. a fire) then the advice is to:

GO OUT:

Go outside the unsafe building and move to a safe distance

STAY OUT:

Stay outside until you are advised to do otherwise

CALL THE EMERGENCY SERVICES OUT:

If someone is missing, tell the emergency services immediately when they arrive



What can I do to be prepared for an emergency?

The first thing to do is make sure that you are adequately insured, and that you keep your insurance documents safe. You can also take precautions to limit the chance of being in an emergency, or of minimising its effect on you by:

Fitting and maintaining a smoke alarm

Plan escape routes if there is a fire and you can't get out of your building the normal way. Remember, in a fire if a door feels hot, it probably means that the fire is on the other side, so don't open that door. If you are trapped in smoke, stay near to the floor where the air will be cleaner.

Fitting and maintaining a carbon monoxide alarm

Fit a carbon monoxide alarm in all rooms containing fuel burning appliances and ensure that you can hear the alarm throughout your home. It is important that your alarm would be able to wake you if you are sleeping. It is a good idea to familiarise yourself with the signs of carbon monoxide poisoning and learn what to do if you

suspect someone is affected.

Know where and how to switch off the gas, electricity and water supplies into your home

You might need to turn these off to prevent further damage to your home in an emergency. If it is not safe, or you do not have time to do this before you need to evacuate your home, do not put yourself at risk.

If you would be particularly vulnerable to power and / or water supply failures contact your utility providers to find out if you would be eligible to go on their priority services register to receive additional support in an emergency. You will need to register with each of your utility providers separately.

How you can prepare for a power cut

- Keep a torch with spare batteries. Take care if using candles.
- Keep a phone with a cord, as cordless phones don't work in a power cut.
- Keep your mobile phone and electronic devices fully charged

- It's especially important if you are unwell, less mobile or very young to keep warm.
- Food should keep for between 4-6 hours in the fridge and 15-24 hours in the freezer if you can avoid opening it.

You can report a power cut by calling **105** or **0800 31 63 105** 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Sign up to weather warnings from the Met Office

The UK's official weather service, the Met Office is responsible for issuing weather warnings for rain, thunderstorms, wind, snow, lightning, ice, extreme heat and fog up to seven days in advance. You can check for current weather warnings online at **metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/uk-warnings** and subscribe to receive email alerts for warnings or follow warnings on Twitter. You can also download the Met Office app and receive alerts on your phone.

Check if you are in a flood risk area

You can check the risk of flooding for your postcode on the Environment Agency website or by telephoning them on **0345 988 1188**.

If you are at risk, register for early warnings to your landline, mobile and / or email address from their free

Floodline Warnings Direct service at **gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings**. Think about the actions you would take if you received a flood warning. Make a list of the items you can move upstairs or to a safe place. Put important documents in polythene bags and move them somewhere safe.

Use the Personal Flood Plan available at **gov.uk/government/publications/personal-flood-plan** to help work through what actions you could take.

Check your contact information is up to date

Make sure you have the correct contact information for your insurance policies and utility providers and keep these in a safe place that you can access easily.

Make sure your work has your up-to-date contact details.

If you have children at school or nursery, make sure they have the correct information about how to reach a parent or designated adult.

Put together an Emergency Kit

Put together some essential items that would help you in an emergency either at home, or if you need to be evacuated with little or no notice. For guidance on what to include in your Emergency Kit see the following section.



What should I have in my Emergency Kit?

An emergency kit is a suggested list of items that could help you cope in an emergency until further help from the emergency services or local authority arrives. It could be for use in your home, or if you have to be evacuated.

The kit could include:

- Copies of insurance and other important documents (e.g. personal identification)
- Keys for your home (remember to lock up if you are evacuated) and vehicle
- List of useful contact numbers
- Money and credit / debit cards
- Mobile phone (and charger)
- Portable power bank (and charger)
- Medication
- Spectacles or contact lenses
- Toiletries
- Valuables and sentimental items (if safe to do so if being evacuated)
- Child's special toy
- Baby food and care items
- Leads, carriers etc for pets
- Spare clothes
- Notepad and pen / pencil
- First aid kit
- Wind up (or battery powered) torch and radio – providing light and information
- Warm, waterproof clothing and blankets
- Bottled water and long-life food (snacks and sweets), including any special food – if it is in a tin remember to keep a tin opener with it



Where will I go if I am evacuated?

If the emergency services ask you to leave your home, please don't argue with them. They are only doing so for your own safety.

It is likely that they will offer you the option of going to a rest centre that would be set up and operated by the local authority with partner organisations. This will be a place of safety, and a source of information, for the on-going emergency.

You may decide to stay with friends or relatives instead. If you do, make sure that the emergency services or the local authority knows how to contact you. If you can decide in advance where to go, make sure you have the contact numbers for where you are going and know how you will meet up with them.



Useful contact numbers

This page contains a list of useful contacts you may want to use in an emergency.

IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS TELEPHONE 999

Deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired people in the UK can alert the emergency services using Relay UK's service by dialling **18000** through the app or from a textphone.

You can also send text messages to 999, as long as you have registered your phone for this service first. To sign up text 'register' to 999. The **emergencysms.net** website provides more information on the service and how to use it.

Royal Greenwich	020 8854 8888
Environment Agency Floodline	0345 988 1188
London Fire Brigade	020 8555 1200 General enquires and non-emergency assistance
Metropolitan Police Service Non - Emergency line Anti Terrorism hotline	101 0800 789 321
NHS	111
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	020 8836 6000
UK Power Networks Electricity supply failure	105 or 0800 31 63 105
Thames Water Water supply failure	0800 316 9800
National Grid Gas leak or carbon monoxide emergency	0800 111 999



My emergency contacts

Use the space below to create your own list of useful contacts you may want to use in an emergency.

Doctor / GP Surgery:	
Work:	
School:	
Vets:	
Insurance company contacts and policy numbers:	Buildings: Contents: Car:
Utility providers:	Electricity: Gas: Water:
Other...	
Family and friends:	



What about emergencies where I work?

Emergencies are not just going to affect you in your home life. It's important for businesses to have plans in place to keep the business or organisation going if there is a fire, flood, health issues like a pandemic, or any other sort of emergency.

Businesses and organisations should have "Business Continuity Management Plans" to help safeguard themselves and their employees should these situations occur.

These plans help to minimise the impact of major emergencies on businesses, helping them to:

- Manage the incident or situation itself
- Keep in touch with staff, customers and suppliers

- Continue to keep the key activities of the organisation running
- Recover effectively and as quickly as possible afterwards

Business Continuity Plans do not have to be long, complicated documents. The best plans are concise and easy to use. The Royal Greenwich website has advice, guidance and downloadable templates you can use:

**[royalgreenwich.gov.uk/
info/200216/emergency_
planning/88/
emergency_
planning_for_
businesses](https://royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200216/emergency_planning/88/emergency_planning_for_businesses)**





Where can I get more information?

Royal Greenwich – Emergency Planning and Business Continuity
royalgreenwich.gov.uk/emergencyplanning
emergencyplanningunit@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
020 8854 8888

Greater London Authority
london.gov.uk/what-we-do/fire-and-resilience

Gov.uk
gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-emergencies/preparing-for-emergencies

Environment Agency
environment-agency.gov.uk

Met Office
metoffice.gov.uk



royalgreenwich.gov.uk