



What to do in case of sewer flooding

Key steps to guide you through an external sewer flooding



2. Someone from Southern Water will come along to investigate

1. Contact your insurer and report the flood

Flooding from sewers is distressing and we are working hard to reduce the risk of it happening. However, it is not always possible to prevent it. This leaflet tells you what to do if you have sewer flooding outside your property.

Who to contact

- It is important to contact your insurer immediately to tell them about any damage the flooding has caused to the exterior of your property.
- If you don't, it may affect any insurance claims you need to make.

Southern Water

- Call our 24-hour emergency number 0330 303 0368.
- Let us know if any nearby properties have been affected so we can help them too.

What we will do

- Where possible, we will attend your property within six hours of you reporting the incident.
- In the event of widespread storms and flooding, it may take us longer to reach you.
- We will call you to let you know we're on our way so please make sure you give us the best number to contact you.
- When we see you, we will give you help and advice about what to do next.
- We will also ask questions about the flooding to help us understand the cause.



Information

As most contaminants will be on or near the surface, they will be exposed to the sun's ultra-violet rays, which are very effective at killing bacteria. Independent laboratory tests show bacteria should reduce to normal levels as follows:

3. Take some photos so we can understand how the flooding happened

5. We will carry out a further investigation if necessary

4. We will carry out a litter pick to help clear debris

- We will check our sewers and carry out work to address the cause as appropriate.
- We will carry out a litter pick of solids and debris, wash down and disinfect all hardstanding areas.
- If the ground is waterlogged, we may need to leave the clean-up for a day or two to avoid spreading the contamination.

What you can do

- If safe to do so, please take photos of the flooded area as the levels may have subsided by the time we get there.
- Pictures will help us work out why it has happened and may allow us to consider whether you're entitled to a payment under our Guaranteed Standards Service.
- Affected fruit and vegetables growing in your garden should be disposed of.
- Keep children and pets away from the flooded areas.

- ☀ In warm, dry summer weather - **nine days**
- ☀ During damper, cooler spring/autumn conditions - **20 days**
- ☀ In cold, wet weather - **25 days**.

How can you stop this happening again?

Sewers sometimes flood during or after heavy rain if they are unable to cope with the amount of water. However, more commonly it is how we use our sewers and what we put down them that causes problems. Many incidences of flooding could be avoided by not flushing items such as:

- Wipes
- Nappies
- Sanitary towels
- Cotton buds
- Tampons and applicators
- Condoms
- Kitchen roll

Fat, oil and grease also cause blockages if poured down plugholes as it hardens when it cools.





Guaranteed standards of service payment

If you have external flooding that is caused by a failure of our drainage system, you may claim an amount equivalent to half your annual sewerage charges, from a minimum of £75 to a maximum £500.

You must complete an application form within three months of the incident. These can be downloaded from our website southernwater.co.uk or you can call 0330 303 0368.

These Guaranteed Standards Service payments are not compensation or an admission of liability.

We are not able to make payments in the following circumstances:

- The flooding was caused by you
- The flooding was caused by exceptional rainfall events
- If our investigation confirms the flooding was a result of a third party issue, for example surface water running over land, river inundation, private drainage or highway drainage.

Conditions may apply. All exceptions can be found on our website:

➤ southernwater.co.uk/guaranteed-standards-for-domestic-customers

For further information contact:

Customer Service Centre

Southern House

PO Box 41

Worthing

BN13 3NZ

Tel:

0330 303 0368

Useful contacts:

Environment Agency

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Tel: 0800 807060

National Flood Forum

www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk

Tel: 01299 403 055