

APPENDIX F

FLOOD ALLEVIATION IN THE HIGHLANDS

CONTACTS

For assistance during flooding...

Normal Working Hours:

COUNCIL AREA	TEC SERVICES Local Contacts
Calthness	01955 607761
Sutherland	01408 623400
Ross and Cromarty	01349 868440
Inverness	01463 703111
Nairn	01667 458522
Badenoch & Strathapey	01540 661206
Lochalder	01397 709000
Skye and Lochalsh	01478 612727

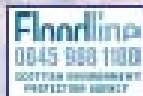
Out of Hours Emergency Numbers:

Housing Services	0845 700 2005
Social Work Services	0845 769 7284
TEC Service	0845 769 7284

Other Information Sources:

SEPA for more advice on flood risk and how to prepare for and react to flooding.

www.sepa.org.uk/flooding



SCOTTISH WATER emergency number:
 0845 600 8855

To request this information in an alternative format e.g., large print, Braille, computer disk, audio tape, or suitable language, please telephone:

01463 702604

What should you do if affected by flooding?

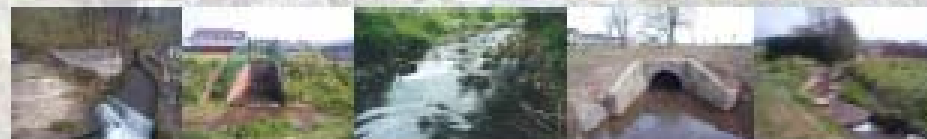
If you have sufficient warning move valuables and items of personal value, such as photographs, to a safe location e.g. upstairs, top of wardrobe etc.

Report any flooding, or risk of flooding, to the Council's TEC Services contact number for your area.

Turn the electricity supply off, as the water may come in contact with junction boxes under the floor. If your house is flooded do not turn electricity back on before having the wiring checked by a qualified electrician.

Contact your insurance company to notify them that your property has been affected by flooding and take their advice on what to do next. If your property is not insured take advice from a reputable builder on the works required to repair your property.

Floodwater can, in some areas become contaminated by sewage. If you come in contact with floodwater outside your home you should, as soon as possible, remove outdoor clothing particularly footwear and wash your hands thoroughly especially before preparing food. Contact your local Council Environmental Health Office or Service Point for hygiene advice.



What can the Council do?

Although the Council maintain watercourses to reduce the risk of flooding there will be occasions when the intensity or duration of rainfall will result in some properties being flooded.

The Council's TEC Services will make filled sandbags available at suitable locations in areas which are liable to be affected by flooding. Where there is a request from elderly, infirm or housebound people sandbags will be delivered to affected areas.

Contact Social Work Services and/or TEC Services if you are aware that a frail or vulnerable person is affected. Contact numbers are provided in this leaflet.



Flood Alleviation in the Highlands



www.highland.gov.uk



RESPONSIBILITIES

Property Owners

Under Common Law the main responsibility for reducing flood risk lies with the owner of the property. It is long established that a property owner should take responsibility for the safety and security of their own property. This includes taking steps to reduce the risk of flooding provided these actions do not increase the risk of flooding to other properties.

Owners can be held liable under common law if they cause flooding to their neighbours by, for example, dumping of rubbish, building of structures or features which reduce the size of the watercourse.

Owners can help to maintain the hydraulic efficiency of a watercourse and reduce the risk of flooding by taking the following advice:

- 1. Carry out regular maintenance to remove obstructions, such as excessive vegetation, which could cause blockages and increase the risk of flooding.
- 2. Do not use the watercourse as a dump for garden rubbish, which may cause a blockage down stream.
- 3. Do not reclaim land by filling in an open watercourse and plugging the water without first obtaining technical advice from a professional engineer.
- 4. Do not build any form of structure or feature, which reduces the size of the watercourse.

The Highland Council

The Council has a duty, under the Flood Prevention and Land Drainage (Scotland) Act 1997 to:

- 1. Periodically assess watercourses to determine whether there is a risk of flooding to property built on non-agricultural land.
- 2. Maintain a watercourse (remove mud, silt and debris) where doing so will substantially reduce the likelihood of flooding to property built on non-agricultural land. This duty does not apply where failure to maintain the watercourse would result only in flooding of land in the same ownership as the watercourse requiring maintenance.
- 3. To publish a biennial report, which contains information about areas affected by flooding and the actions taken to reduce the risk of future flooding.

The Council carries out regular maintenance of culverts, inlet screens and other areas where there is a known risk of flooding to properties.

Scottish Water

Scottish Water is responsible for:

- 1. Dealing with carriage drainage i.e. water from driveways, hard standings and the roofs of buildings that is drained to their sewers.
- 2. Dealing with the immediate impact of flooding from sewers.

Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

SEPA provides:

- 1. Floodline - 0845 768 1188 - a 24 hour a day, 365 days a year public information service providing Scotland-wide flood alert information through Flood Watch, more specific alerts for areas covered by Flood Warning schemes, and general advice on how to prepare for and cope with flooding. Flooding can also be reported through Floodline. The service is supported by the flood updates at www.sepa.org.uk/flooding
- 2. 9 flood warning schemes in the Highlands, operated in partnership with the police and local authorities.
- 3. Flood warnings to the police and local authorities.
- 4. Advice to local authorities on flood prevention and flood risk for planning purposes.
- 5. Answers to public queries on potential flood risk to areas and properties.

Major Flood Alleviation Schemes

Where the risk of flooding affects a significant number of properties the Council has powers to promote a formal flood alleviation scheme. These works are normally extensive and require a Flood Prevention Order promoted by the Council. This process can take a number of years to complete and involves public consultation. Objections to the scheme may lead to a Public Enquiry.

Details of flood alleviation schemes in progress can be found in the Council's capital programme.

BE PREPARED

Flooding is a natural process that can happen suddenly, while official bodies like the Highland Council, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the police all play a part in giving warnings and assistance, the person who can do most to help is you.

What can you do to be prepared?

If you live in an area that is prone to flooding, do what you can now to prepare for a flood. Don't wait until it happens, you may not have time.

- 1. Make sure you have adequate insurance. Flood damage is included in most building insurance policies but do check your home and contents are covered.
- 2. Make up a flood kit - including key personal documents, torch, battery or wind-up radio, mobile phone, rubber gloves, wellington boots, waterproof clothing, first aid kit and blankets.
- 3. Keep details of your insurance policy and the emergency contact number somewhere safe - preferably as part of your flood kit.
- 4. Make a list of useful numbers you may need - local Council Service Point, the emergency services and your SEPA Floodline quick-dial code - obtained during your first call to Floodline.
- 5. Get into the habit of storing valuable or sentimental items and important documents upstairs or in a high place.
- 6. Keep some sandbags or other purpose-made flood protection products to block doorways and airbricks - a list of manufacturers and suppliers is available through Floodline.
- 7. Make sure you know where to turn off your gas, electricity and water. If you're not sure, ask the person who checks your meter when they next visit. Mark the tap or switch with a sticker to help you remember.