

Householders' guide for emergencies



Coping with emergencies

999

When you dial **999** the first person to answer will be an operator who will ask which service you require and your telephone number because, if the line is cut, or you are unable to continue the call, the operator can trace where you are and send the emergency services to your assistance. Only use the **999** number for a genuine emergency.



If you need more than one emergency service, ask for the most important one first and then make sure you tell the operator which other service(s) is required. For instance, if the emergency is a fire then request Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service but bear in mind you may also need Police and Ambulance. The operator may well refer the information to the other services anyway, but it is better safe than sorry.

Dealing with an emergency

The one thing you can be sure of in an emergency situation is that it will probably be the last thing you expected. Floods, severe weather, accidents or incidents involving dangerous chemicals usually strike without warning.

This leaflet aims to explain some simple steps everyone can take to be ready when an emergency strikes. It explains easy safety measures, how to reduce damage to property and what to do if you have to move out of your home until danger has passed.

This simple guide aims to help people cope with the unexpected and assist the emergency services in dealing quickly and efficiently with major emergencies.

Keep it in a safe place - one day it may prove vital.

Whatever the situation, it is important to be ready to follow instructions from the police and other emergency services.

Planning for an emergency is never easy because no one can predict what might happen - a major road, train, air or river accident; a serious fire; violent storms; flooding or a dangerous chemical incident.

Whatever happens, it will almost certainly mean police, fire and ambulance services involvement. The emergency services are supported by Wiltshire Council Emergency Planning Service and where necessary other departments from Wiltshire Council.

Plans are constantly updated for mobilising social services, housing, highways, environmental health and others who may need to swing into action quickly to cope with an emergency. The situation may require the evacuation of a whole community and finding emergency accommodation, or it could mean clearing blocked roads to allow emergency services through.


Rest centres may be set up, food and blankets provided and information given to anxious relatives. Steps need to be taken to reunite families who are parted by an emergency situation, perhaps because the children were at school or some people were at work.

Emergency planners coordinate all the preparations and plans and in conjunction with all the council departments prepare for any possible event.



Emergency evacuation of houses

If the **police** ask you to leave your home, don't argue. Their prime responsibility is your safety and they will know more than you about the level of danger.

- They will probably ask you to go to a Rest Centre - if you decide to go anywhere else, let someone know so you can be accounted for.
- Don't worry if you are sick, frail or disabled as special arrangements will be made for you. Every effort will be made to reunite families quickly.
- *If* there is time, take along medicines, warm clothes, any special foods, personal documents, immediate valuables, and baskets and leads for pets. Before you leave make sure fires are out, switch off gas and electricity and lock up. It is a good idea to keep a tick list of essential items somewhere handy so ensure you don't forget anything vital.
- The police will guard your property during your absence.
- Severe weather can mean power cuts and possibly loss of other services over a wide area. Keep a small emergency pack and know where to find it - even in the dark! Keep a torch, radio (with batteries or a wind up one), candles, matches, and a camping gas cooker ring in it.
- Watch out for fire risks if you have to use candles! 
- You may need to switch off supplies at the main - if you don't know how to do this, check with gas, electricity and water authorities.
- **If you need the police, fire or ambulance services in a hurry dial 999 and give the BT operator your number so you can be traced if the line is cut.**
- If anyone is seriously hurt you will obviously need the ambulance service, but you may be able to deal with minor injuries yourself with some knowledge of First Aid.



Rest Centre Registration

Damage to property & possessions

Accidents, storms or flooding can leave a trail of destruction in their wake. Proper insurance, cover for property and possessions can ease much of the distress.

Insurance can cover the cost of building repairs and replacement of household contents as new – you can insure against a wide range of risks including “Acts of God”.

Councils or housing associations will repair the buildings they own, but tenants should check whether they need to insure their personal possessions themselves.

- Tenants should know who to contact for emergency repairs.
- People with leasehold or privately rented homes should check agreements for property repairs with the landlord or agent.
- If you need to arrange repairs stick to established firms with a good reputation.
- If you can't find anyone suitable, ask a recognised trade association for advice.
- Decide now which firms you would use in an emergency, and make a note of their telephone numbers with details of your insurance.
- A sudden emergency may mean you need to contact relatives, health, emergency and repair services quickly. Keep important telephone numbers on the pages at the rear of this booklet.
- Elderly, handicapped or people who are ill can add the numbers of health workers and other helpers.
- Only make calls that are absolutely necessary because the telephone system may become overloaded in a major emergency.

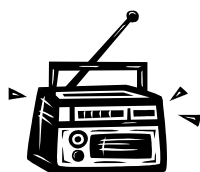


Radio: Warning the public

The police may request the appropriate local radio stations to issue warning and advice messages, check that you know where to find your local station. Be sure that you have a battery operated radio available.

The following are local radio frequencies that cover the County of Wiltshire.

BBC Radio Wiltshire FM	104.3 MHz North & West Wilts 104.9 MHz Marlborough Area 103.5 MHz South of the County
BBC Radio Wiltshire MW	1332 KHz
BBC Radio Swindon BBC Radio Swindon MW	103.6 MHz 1368 KHz
Heart FM	96.5 MHz Marlborough 97.2 MHz Swindon 102.2 MHz West Wiltshire
Spire FM	102 MHz Salisbury
Brunel FM	107.7 MHz Swindon
BBC Radio Gloucester FM	95/95.8/104.7 MHz
BBC Somerset Sound FM BBC Somerset Sound MW	95.5 MHz 1566 KHz (227m)
BBC Radio Bristol FM BBC Radio Bristol MW	94.9/95.5/104.6 MHz 1548 KHz (194m)
Gold MW	936 KHz Wiltshire 1161 KHz Swindon
3TR FM	107.5 MHz Warminster and Frome
BBC Radio Solent FM BBC Radio Solent MW	96.1/103.8 MHz 999 & 1359 KHz (221&300m)



If there is a risk of flooding

- Keep an emergency pack of torch and radio with batteries, candles, matches, camping gas cooker ring and bottled water.
- Protect doorways and low level air vents with sandbags or rubbish bags filled with earth. Use silicon sealant to help make doors and windows more water resistant.
- Turn off gas and electricity.
- Move as much as you can, including food, upstairs.
- If you are trapped by flooding remain near a window to attract attention.
- The Environment Agency has produced a range of leaflets giving information on how to limit damage to your home, what to do in an emergency and how to restore your home after a flood.

If you need advice call **the Environment Agency Floodline on 0845 988 1188** or visit the website **www.environment-agency.gov.uk**

Further advice is available on the Wiltshire Council website **Wiltshire.gov.uk** under flooding.

To minimise damage:

- Place sandbags, plywood or metal sheets outside all doors, window frames and airbricks.
- Put plugs into sinks and baths and weigh them down; disconnect washing machine and dishwasher outlets.
- Store chemicals like paint, cleaning products and pesticides high up.
- Put electrical equipment and as much furniture as possible upstairs or if you can't do this weigh down furniture with something heavy.
- Make sure your important documents and any sentimental items are stored in a safe place.
- Move your car to higher ground.
- Weigh down manhole covers with something heavy.
- Make sure pets are safe.

When a flood hits:

- Listen to local radio for flood warnings and information or call Floodline.
- Don't try to walk or drive through flood water – it could be contaminated or contain hazards you can't see.
- Don't walk on sea defences, riverbanks or river bridges – they may collapse.

And afterwards:

- Check your insurance policy and find out what your insurance company will pay for.
- Take photos or video footage of the damage.
- Mark the water levels for reference.
- Wear protective clothes when cleaning up.
- Remove mud and disinfect with hot soapy water and detergent.

- Dispose of soft furnishings, food and clothes, which have been in contact with flood water.

If a severe storm is threatened

- Tie down loose items outside that cannot be brought in.
- Stay indoors - preferably downstairs - and keep pets in.
- Clear windowsills and close curtains to protect against flying glass.
- If gas, electricity or water is cut off, tell the relevant service.
- As soon as it is safe, rope off or protect damaged areas to prevent injury from falling masonry, broken glass or electric cables.

Chemical, radiation accidents, toxic fumes & smoke

- Stay indoors, shut all doors and windows and tune to your local radio station.
- Switch off air conditioning or fans.
- If you are outside, go to the nearest public building or shop.
- Listen to loudspeaker and radio announcements, and be ready to move if the area is evacuated.

Contacts

Family contacts	
Name	Telephone number
Special help	
Name	Telephone number
Doctor	
Social worker	
Health visitor	
Home carer	

Essential services	
Name	Telephone number
Gas	
Electricity	
Water	
Environment Agency Floodline	0845 988 188
Other useful telephone numbers	
Roof repairs	
Builder	
Plumber	
Electrician	
Glazier	
Carpenter	
Gas technicians (British Gas approved)	
Council/Housing Association emergency repairs	
Insurance company/Broker policy number	
Type of cover	

This document was published by Wiltshire Council, Public Health and Well Being, Emergency Planning Service. Our contact details are as follows:

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