

What can I do to clean the inside of my house following flooding?

- **If you use disinfectant, don't wipe down surfaces immediately** – this will reduce its effectiveness.
- **Place any soft furnishings and any other items that are heavily soiled and/or damaged beyond repair outside** – this will help prevent the spread of bacteria.
- **Wash down all hard surfaces with a mild detergent/disinfectant** – always remember to follow manufacturers' instructions.
- **Launder clothing, bedding and other soft articles on a hot wash (60°C and above)** – items that cannot be washed should be professionally cleaned or disposed of.
- **Allow everything to dry thoroughly** – this will help destroy germs. Moderate heating in conjunction with good ventilation can help the drying out process.

How should I clean up outside following flooding?

- **Don't apply disinfectant to lawns and borders** – this can kill plants and do more harm than good. The best long-term treatment is to let nature take its course.
- **Don't attempt to dig or rake the affected area** – this will spread the contamination further into the soil or turf.
- **Wash down and disinfect hard surfaces such as paths and drives** – we suggest keeping off these areas for three hours to allow the disinfectant time to work.
- **The sun's ultra violet rays are very effective at killing off bacteria** – however the natural breakdown of bacteria is dependent upon climatic conditions e.g. temperature, moisture, vegetation and soil type etc. As a rough guide, bacteria will return back to normal backgrounds levels as follows:
 - **9 days** during a warm, dry summer conditions.
 - **20 days** during damper, cooler spring/autumnal conditions.
 - **25 days** during wet, cold winter conditions.

Free ways to contact us:

-  **Chat with us live on our website**
-  **Free callback service via our website**
No waiting around on hold, fill out a simple form and one of our advisors will call you back as soon as possible.
-  **Visit our website yorkshirewater.com**
-  **Tweet us @YWHelp**
-  **Contact us on Facebook**
-  **Flooding drain or sewer? Report it at yorkshirewater.com/sewagereport**
-  **Call our free leakline number on 0800 57 35 53**

Other ways to contact us:

Telephone **0345 1 24 24 24**

Our contact centre is open for billing enquiries Monday to Friday 8am-8pm and Saturday 9am-5pm. For water and sewerage enquiries we're open Monday to Saturday 6.30am-10pm and Sunday 7.30am-10pm. We're open 24 hours a day for emergency calls.

24 Hour automated services **0345 1 247 247**
(meter readings and payments)

Write to us **PO Box 52, Bradford, BD3 7YD**

What to do if your home is flooded with sewage



Is there a health risk associated with sewage flooding?

If you adopt basic hygiene procedures, and follow the instructions provided, you're unlikely to be at any increased risk from sewage flooding.

- **Wash hands and disinfect footwear after** any contact with the sewage.
- **Avoid contact with the sewage** and keep children and pets out of the affected area.
- **Protect cuts and grazes** with waterproof dressings and wear protective clothing during cleaning up, for example rubber gloves.
- **Don't eat any fruit or vegetables growing in the garden** if it has flooded and don't plant any new ones for at least six months after sewer flooding. In the following six months you can plant new crops, provided you don't harvest them until two months after the incident.
- **Turn off or isolate electricity and/or gas points** if flood water is in danger of reaching them.
- **Ensure your home/outbuildings are well ventilated** by leaving windows open as much as possible and by unblocking any airbricks to ensure a free flow of air - but still remember your home needs to be secure.
- **Contact your GP immediately if you have any symptoms** such as diarrhoea or vomiting after a flood.

What help is available and what can you do?

We know that any flooding, whether it's inside or outside your home can be a very distressing experience. Follow our simple tips and advice at yorkshirewater.com/floods. Flooding from public sewers is something we try very hard to prevent but unfortunately, on occasions, it can still happen.

Why does sewer flooding occur?

Our sewers are designed to take waste water away from properties and, in some cases day to day surface water which runs off roads, footpaths and paved areas. However, while our sewer network is designed to cope with normal day to day flows, in exceptional circumstances it can become too full or blocked. With nowhere else to go, the trapped water finds its way back up through manholes, drains, sinks or toilets, potentially causing flooding.

There are a number of reasons why sewers become blocked or too full to cope with the amount of waste water in them. These include:

- heavy rainfall, flooding from rivers and flooding from other drainage systems;
- blockages caused by people disposing of inappropriate items like fat, oil or grease down the sinks or baby wipes, sanitary products or cotton buds down the toilet;
- incorrect drain connections.

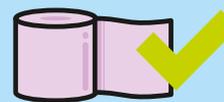
There are things you can do to prevent blockages in the future



Don't flush any type of wipes down the loo.



Always throw wipes in the bin.



You must only flush the three P's (which is pee, poo and paper) anything else going down the toilet can block pipes and cause flooding.

Think – no fats down the sink!

Remember to bin your leftover cooking fats, oils and greases so they don't block your pipes

Find out more at yorkshirewater.com/blockages

37% of all blockages in sewers in Yorkshire are caused by people putting the wrong things down their toilets and sinks.



Types of flooding



Internal

Where waste water has entered your property through doorways, air bricks, cable ducts or other means.



External

Where waste water has flooded your garden, but has not entered your property.

What should you do if your home has been flooded by sewage?

Contact your own insurance company

They will be able to give you help and advice about making a claim. It's worth noting that if you don't notify your insurance company it could jeopardise any future insurance claim.

We have no liability for sewage flooding that is beyond our control and therefore your insurance company are best placed to help you regarding loss and damage.

If you would like to seek some expert independent advice, the Property Care Association (PCA) is the trade association representing specialists across the UK who can resolve problems affecting buildings. Please note that the PCA, as a trade association, is not able to recommend specific contractors but it can offer independent advice to homeowners.

The PCA can be contacted by the following methods:

The Property Care Association 11 Ramsay Court Kingfisher Way Hinchingsbrooke Business Park Huntingdon PE29 6FY

Web: <http://www.property-care.org/>

Email: pca@property-care.org

Tel: 0844 375 4301