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## Preparing for a flood



**Fact:** Just 150mm (6 inches) of fast-flowing water can knock you off your feet.

If you live in a flood risk area you should always have preparations in place in case a flood should happen. Long-term preparations are the best way to ensure that your property is protected against flood damage.



- ◆ To improve the flood proofing of your walls you can use products such as liquid membranes, polymer/cement coatings, mastic asphalt or pre-formed sheet membranes.
- ◆ To improve the flood resistance of your windows and doors ensure that the seal around the frames is intact and has no cracks. Also, treat any wooden frames with oil-based waterproof stains, paint or varnish.
- ◆ There are a range of temporary defences that can be used to protect your house in the event of a flood, such as sandbags, floodboards and wrapping. If purchasing these products please refer to Chapter 9.
- ◆ If you are carrying out any extension or building work on your house, it would be a good idea to consider having a waterproof membrane built into the foundations. Also consider closed-cell cavity insulation at ground-floor level and a raised damp-proof course. The electrical sockets should be placed above the height reached by floodwater in previous years and any air conditioning, heating or gas units should be situated on the first floor or in the attic.
- ◆ Ensure that any streams, rivers or lakes on your property are able to flow freely. Check for blockages in the stream and ensure that the banks have not eroded.
- ◆ Always ensure that you have a stock of materials which are useful during a flood, such as plywood, plastic sheeting, sandbags (unfilled), sand, nails, a hammer, shovel, bricks, blocks of wood and a saw.
- ◆ Stay vigilant and regularly inspect your property for cracks or gaps in the brickwork and floors or around windows, doors and pipes.
- ◆ If you live in a flood risk area it is always a good idea to store any sentimental personal items upstairs or above the highest possible flood level as these are impossible to replace. The same is true of bank and insurance details as well as essential contact numbers.
- ◆ Valuable items, such as computers, televisions, etc., should also be stored if possible above ground level. A computer, for example, should be kept on the table or desk rather than under it.

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