



What we promise

Sewer flooding isn't a nice experience for anyone and we want to make sure you are compensated for your inconvenience.

If the inside of your home has been flooded with wastewater from our sewers, we'll automatically credit your Thames Water account with your annual wastewater service charge (from £150 - £1000)

If the outside of your property has been flooded with wastewater from our sewers and you have suffered damage, financial loss or loss of amenity you can claim half of your annual wastewater service charge (from £75 - £500). Please call 0800 316 9800 to get a claim form.

Contacting your insurance

It's important to contact your home insurance providers to let them know about any damage caused by the flooding. They may be able to help you get a more comprehensive clean-up for your home or other services to help you get back to normal as quickly as possible.

Our next steps

If we can't find a cause of the flooding when we first visit your property, we'll continue to carry out investigations. After 30 days we will make sure we have an update for you and let you know how we're going to put things right.

Who can help?

We want to make sure you can get in contact with the right people, so you can get the right help as soon as possible

Public sewer

If you have an urgent sewer-related matter contact our 24-hour customer service team:

- 0800 807 060
- 0800 316 9800
- [Thameswater.co.uk/sewerflooding](https://www.thameswater.co.uk/sewerflooding)

Textphone service

0800 316 9898

Highway flooding

To report a problem with flooding from roads, gullies or ditches contact your local council or highways team.

Surface water and groundwater

If surface water or groundwater is causing you a problem, please get in touch with your local council

River flooding

If a river has burst its banks that is causing you a problem.

You may also be able to sign up to alerts to keep you up to date with potential river flooding in your area. Please note that these warnings do not cover sewer, surface water or groundwater flooding.

0345 988 1188

[gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings](https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings)

Public Health England

For information on public health visit: [hpa.org.uk](https://www.hpa.org.uk)

Flood preparation

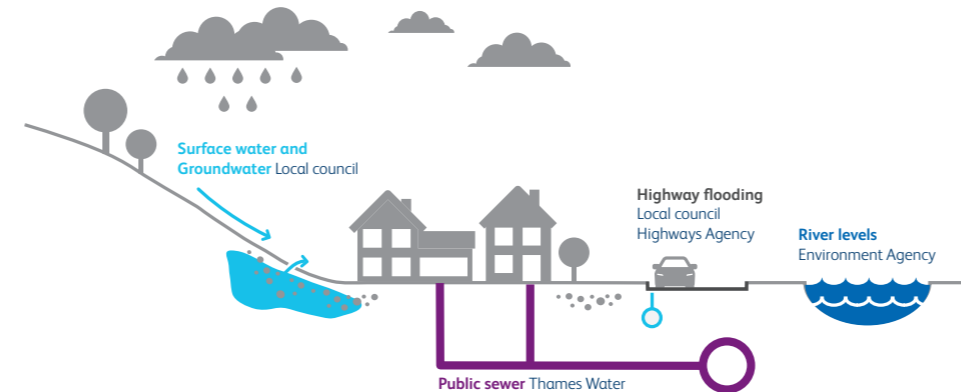
For advice on preparing for a flood visit: [gov.uk/prepare-for-a-flood](https://www.gov.uk/prepare-for-a-flood)

Sewer flooding advice

Putting things right should the worst happen.



Who's responsible for what?



Putting things right

If sewers have flooded your property, rest assured we treat all cases with the highest priority.

What we'll do

We know how unpleasant sewer flooding can be and we want to make sure you can get back to normal as quickly as possible.

If our sewers have caused your property to flood, we'll clean up the affected areas free of charge.

We aim to begin the clean-up on the same day, but have to wait for the water to recede before we start this. Please be aware that weather conditions can have an impact on our response time – but don't worry, we'll keep you fully updated on what is happening.

Our clean-up includes:

- Litter picking
- Washing down affected areas
- Pumping out basements
- Disinfection

We hope that you aren't flooded more than once, but if you are please let us know. We will keep a record of this and work to find a solution to prevent any future flooding.

Keeping you safe

Your safety is important to us, please remember to:

- Keep children and pets away from flooded areas
- Wash yours and your children's hands frequently
- Wear protective clothing, such as rubber gloves if you are cleaning
- Throw away any food which may have been in contact with flood water
- If you show symptoms such as diarrhoea or vomiting after a flood, call your doctor straight away.

Your outdoor areas

If an outdoor area is flooded by sewage, to keep you safe and to allow for any bacteria to be killed, we recommend you keep off it for:

- 9 days if it's warm and dry
- 20 days when it's damp and cool
- 25 days when it's wet and cold

Your drinking water

Your drinking water should be safe to use because the pipes that carry it are sealed and under pressure, meaning they will force out clean water and not let anything in – even if there is a leak.

If you have any concerns or questions about your drinking water, please get in touch.

Cleaning your home

Here are a few useful tips to help you should you decide to clean your property yourself:

- Use food-safe disinfectant to wash down kitchen work surfaces and storage areas
- Don't rake or dig outdoor areas as this can slow down the process of bacteria dying off
- Leave soil used for growing crops unused for 12 months
- Disinfectant can be used on hard surfaces such as paths, patios, decking and furniture but it can also kill plants and grass

- If you've been flooded inside, using a low-level heater and opening the windows can speed up the drying process, but should only be done after the water has receded
- Do not use petrol or diesel generators or equipment indoors as exhaust fumes are dangerous

Tankers and pumps

In some circumstances we use tanker vehicles and pumps to help minimise the impact of sewer flooding, but in certain cases they aren't suitable.

Tanker vehicles are used to remove large amounts of water from an affected area but can only offer limited relief from flooding. Their use is also dependent on where we can return the water to.

Pumps are stationary and will be used as a temporary measure where possible. They also work to remove water away from an affected area and also aren't suitable in all situations.

Our tankers and pumps are prioritised to protect homes and properties that are at risk of internal flooding. They have the most impact in these circumstances and ensures we protect as many homes as possible.

Portaloos and sandbags

Sandbags and flood barriers are used to protect our pumps and sewer treatment sites from floodwater, which then helps to minimise the impact of flooding on homes and properties. We don't usually give them out to individuals, but we will always assess each situation.

We're really sympathetic to those who are unable to use their toilet facilities and we will work with the local authorities to assist in the restoration of your facilities.

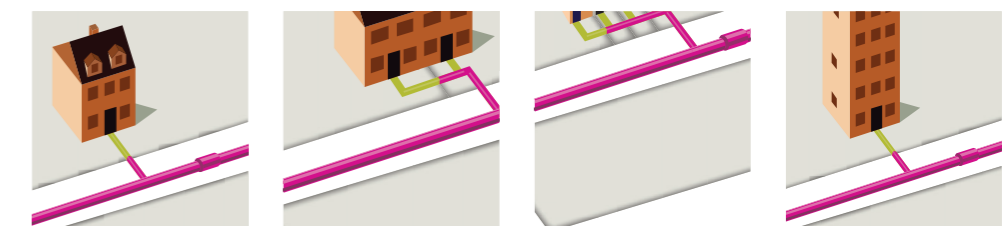
Sewer flooding causes

There are many different causes of sewer flooding, including:

- Climate change
- Population increase
- Grassed areas being paved over
- Fat, grease and other food products being poured down the sink
- Wet wipes, nappies or other sanitary products being flushed down the toilet
- Urban areas can be sometimes affected more due to the sewers taking away waste products as well as rainwater

These factors increase pressure on the network and mean they reach capacity, especially during heavy rainfall periods, which can then cause them to overflow

Who owns your sewer?



Detached

Semi-detached

Terraced

Flats

— Public sewer/drain – responsibility of the water and sewerage company

— Privately owned – responsibility of the property owner

— Property boundary