

Be prepared for an emergency

Household Emergency Plan

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Why should you prepare for emergencies?

Emergencies can be unexpected and even if we think that they won't affect us, we never know what might happen. Emergencies can significantly disrupt our daily lives and whilst we can't prevent them happening, we can plan ahead to minimise the impact.

This guide outlines simple steps to help you prepare, a few minutes thinking about it now could make a big difference in helping to keep you and your family safe. You should ensure that everyone in your household knows about the plan and what to do in the event of an emergency.

What planning takes place in Surrey?

Planning for emergencies ensures that the emergency services, local authorities and other responding organisations better communicate and coordinate their efforts, improving both the management at the scene and the post disaster recovery process for the people of Surrey.

Various agencies in Surrey work together to plan a coordinated and integrated response should the unthinkable occur in the county. This includes planning to respond quickly and effectively to an emergency and planning to work with communities to assist with the recovery and the restoration of post disaster normality. The primary response organisations come together under what is called the Surrey Local Resilience Forum, which is made up of the emergency services, local authorities, Highways Agency, Environment Agency, NHS Surrey, transport and utility providers.



Emergency Planning in the UK is legislated by the Civil Contingencies Act (2004), which sets out clearly how organisations, particularly local responders, should go about preparing plans for emergencies.

How to prepare yourself for an emergency

Although emergency responders plan, train and exercise to respond to emergencies, it is important for you to take steps to ensure you and your family know what to do in the event of an emergency. After a large emergency, the usual services we take for granted, such as running water, refrigeration, and telephones, may be unavailable and so you should prepare to be self sufficient until more help arrives.

There are many ways to make sure you and your family are more prepared for emergencies. Follow the checklist below to see if you are ready!

Emergency preparedness checklist

- Prepare a household emergency plan
- Put together an emergency grab bag
- Teach other members of your family about what to do in an emergency
- Teach children how and when to call the emergency services (999)
- Learn first aid
- Buy a first aid kit for your home and family car(s)
- Find out how to turn off home gas, electricity and water supplies
- Fit smoke alarms on each floor of your house
- Plan escape routes from your home and housing area
- Ensure you have sufficient house and contents insurance
- Make duplicate copies of important documents and store them safely
- Identify an 'ICE' (in case of emergency) contact
- Agree alternative meeting points if you cannot get to your home
- Think about the risks that may affect you and how you would react
- Look at the emergency procedures for your workplace and child's school
- Find out about neighbours that may need your help in an emergency

What to do in an emergency

If you find yourself in an emergency situation, your common sense and instincts will normally tell you what to do, but it is important to follow this advice:

- If you or someone else's life is in danger call 999
- Follow the advice local emergency responders give you
- Never put yourself or others in unnecessary danger.

In an emergency it is normally safest to...



GO IN to a safe building



STAY IN until you are advised to do otherwise



TUNE IN to local TV or radio for more information.

If your children are at school you will naturally want to collect them as soon as possible in the event of a major emergency, but it may not be safe to do so. Schools have emergency procedures and it is probably safer for the children to stay there. Listen to local news or visit the Surrey County Council website for advice and for details of what to do during an emergency.

If you are evacuated

In some situations the emergency services may advise you to evacuate your home or place of work for your own safety. Stay calm, follow advice from the emergency services and ask for help if you need it. If you are unable to self evacuate stay where you are until the emergency services come to help you. Do not try to travel anywhere if you are told it is unsafe to do so.

Don't go back to your home until you are told it is safe to do so - keep tuned in to local TV and radio for advice.

Your local borough or district council has designated rest centres to be used in the event of an evacuation of residents. If you are evacuated, you will be told where the nearest rest centre is or you can stay with family or friends if they aren't affected by the incident. The location of the rest centre is decided at the time of the incident and is usually a village hall, leisure centre or similar public building.

If you have time and it's safe to do so:

- Consider turning off the water, gas and electricity supply
- Lock up your premises
- Take anything you think you might need, including your 'emergency grab bag'
- Check on neighbours who might need help or let the emergency services know about them
- If you have pets, make sure they are in a proper pet-carrier or on a lead.

What to expect at a rest centre

- On arrival you will be asked to provide your details, such as your name and any special needs. This information may be used to help identify you as safe to those friends and family that are concerned about you during an incident
- Food and drinks are provided, along with bedding if the centre needs to stay open overnight
- If you are taken to a rest centre during an emergency you do not have to stay there, once you have gathered your thoughts you may prefer to contact a family member or friend to stay with. Remember to notify a member of staff that you are leaving.



Types of incident you may be affected by...

There are a number of different types of incidents that you may be affected by, the risks will be different throughout the county and therefore the risks you face may vary between where you live and work. You should consider the potential hazards and what action you and your family can take to minimise danger to life and property.

The Surrey Local Resilience Forum has produced a community risk register. Some of the higher risks you may be affected by in Surrey are detailed below.

Flooding

Around 5 million people in the UK live in areas at risk of river flooding, to see whether you live in a flood prone area check the Environment Agency website. If you are at risk, sign up for Environment Agency flood warnings. This is a free service, which sends you a direct message when flooding is expected that may affect your property.



Protect your home

- Purchase equipment to protect your house in the event of a flood
- You can buy sandbags from builder's merchants and most DIY stores
- Flood boards can be installed when flooding is imminent, these fix to frames around windows and doors
- Buy covers to go over air bricks
- Check your insurance covers flooding and during a flood take photos as evidence of damage
- Move as much furniture as possible upstairs. Any furniture that can't be moved can be raised on bricks
- Move computers and electrical items upstairs
- Ensure personal items such as photo albums and important documents are stored high up
- Move your car to higher ground if it might be at risk
- Bring caged outdoor pets inside
- Turn off power, gas and water supplies before the floodwaters enter the building if it's safe to do so.

Protect yourself

- Do not walk through floodwater if at all possible and never let children play in the floodwater. Just 15cm of fast flowing water can knock someone off their feet. The water is likely to contain sewage and dangers can be hidden under the water, such as open drains
- Don't drive through floodwater, the water may be deeper than it looks – cars can float in just 60cm of water.

Reservoir flooding

A reservoir is usually an artificial lake where water is kept for use. Some reservoirs supply water for household and industrial use, others serve purposes such as fishing lakes or leisure facilities. Reservoirs in the UK have a very good safety record and the chance of one of them failing is very low, they are stringently regulated, supervised and inspected by qualified engineers. However, the potential impact of a failure can be high.

Surrey's Local Resilience Forum has emergency planning arrangements in place for reservoir emergencies involving large raised reservoirs. There are a number of reservoirs in Surrey that meet the threshold capacity for this planning.

Reservoir flood maps and frequently asked questions are available on the Environment Agency's website where you can enter a postcode to find out if you live or work in an area that could be affected by reservoir flooding.

If you live or work in an area that could be flooded if a reservoir failed, you will be alerted if there is ever a risk of failure in one or more of the following ways:

- The emergency services in your area may knock on your door or use a loudhailer system. You may be given an evacuation card which will also give you specific advice about where you should go
- Helicopter Skyshout (public address system) warnings may be given
- Local television and radio alerts.

To prepare in advance for reservoir flooding you should:

- Visit the Environment Agency's website to find out if you live or work in an area that might be affected by reservoir flooding
- Plan where to go if there is a risk of reservoir failure
- Put together a grab bag or flood kit of things you might need in an emergency
- Know who you would need to contact e.g. family members
- Be vigilant and be prepared to act quickly to get yourself to safety.

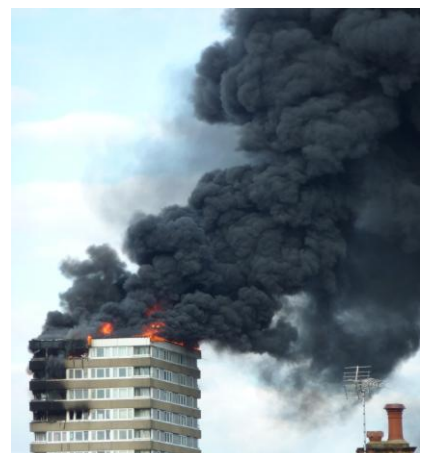
If you think you spot any warning signs of a problem with a reservoir you should ring the **Environment Agency Incident Helpline: 0800 807060**.

Fires

Fire and smoke can kill; just two or three breaths of toxic smoke and you are unconscious. It is important to ensure you and your family are prepared and know what to do in the event of a fire in your home or other building.

Protect your home

- Whilst cooking do not leave pans unattended, unless you turn the heat off
- Do not overload electrical sockets
- Install and maintain smoke detectors and fire extinguishers



- Do not leave a candle burning in a room which is unoccupied
- Ensure all candles are completely extinguished before going to bed
- Consider storing important documents in a fire proof safe.

Protect yourself

- If there is a fire get out, stay out and call 999
- Never re-enter a building that is on fire until the fire service says it is safe to do so
- Make a fire action plan so that everyone in your home knows how to escape if there is a fire.

Heathland Fires

Heath fires are at their most devastating during periods of hot and sunny weather when the grass and undergrowth are particularly dry. Fire can travel through gorse and dry undergrowth very quickly.



How people can help prevent these devastating fires

- If out walking or having a picnic, be sure to dispose of cigarettes and other smoking materials carefully and ensure they are fully extinguished
- On most heathlands it is actually illegal to light any fire, including barbecues, without the permission of the landowner
- Please educate children about the devastating consequences of causing fires.

What to do if a fire does break out in the Surrey countryside

- Call Surrey Fire and Rescue Service on 999 without delay
- Keep well away from the fire – heathland fires can spread fast
- Only attempt to put it out if you are certain it is safe to do so
- If you have livestock which may be affected, prepare to evacuate them if necessary
- If you have farm machinery, prepare to use it to assist Surrey Fire and Rescue Service.

Power, water or gas cuts

The loss of water to an area is not just an inconvenience, it can also create health issues. If your whole area has lost water, it is the responsibility of your water supplier to provide alternative water sources, this could be standpipes, bottled water or water tankers. However, it is also useful to make sure you are prepared by keeping an emergency supply of water in your house. In the event of a loss of water supply ensure you maintain hygiene levels by keeping a supply of alcohol hand wash or wipes in your home.



Gas and power cuts, especially in winter can particularly affect older people and the vulnerable e.g. those with a severe illness. If you have a gas or power cut check on any relatives or neighbours that may be made vulnerable.

Many utility providers provide 'priority services', which means that they can offer special assistance to vulnerable customers in the event of a loss in their service provision to their home. Contact your utility provider for details of how to sign up for these schemes.

Severe weather

Severe weather can include rain, snow, dense fog, strong winds and high temperatures, these can all make driving conditions very dangerous, cause damage to homes and other property. They can also have detrimental impacts on health, especially that of the very young and older people.

Gales

Gales (very strong winds) can cause widespread damage and injury due to falling trees, falling masonry and flying debris. Gales can also result in loss of power if lines are down or disruption to transport networks.



When gales are predicted

- Secure loose objects
- Close and fasten doors and windows
- Park vehicles in a garage or clear of trees and fences.

During a gale

- Stay indoors if possible
- Do not drive unless your journey is essential and avoid exposed routes.

Following a gale

- Stay clear of downed power lines
- Check on vulnerable neighbours and relatives.

Heatwave

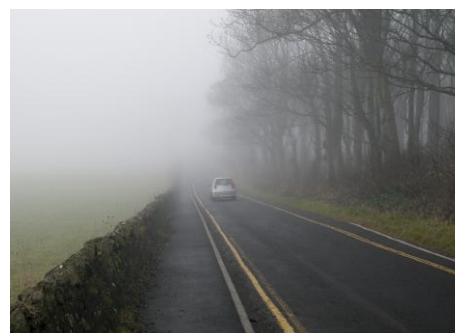
Hot, sunny weather can be fun, but heat can have serious impacts on your health. Heat affects elderly and the young worst.

Heatwave advice

- Try to keep out of the heat, especially between 11am and 3pm
- Try to keep rooms shaded, close curtains if you need to
- If you must go out try to keep in the shade, wear a hat, suncream and light cotton clothing
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Check on those that may be made vulnerable by the weather, including older people and the very young
- Do not leave pets unattended in vehicles
- Check the Met Office website for heat health watch updates.

Dense fog

Travelling in dense fog can be very dangerous. It can often be patchy and can suddenly come down, so taking precautions and knowing what to do on the road should help prepare you in the event of heavy fog.



Whilst driving

- Avoid travel where possible
- Drive slowly
- Drive with dipped headlights
- Turn on fog lights when visibility is below 100 meters.

When walking

- Take care as you may not be visible to traffic
- Wear reflective clothing.

Snow and ice

Low temperatures can increase the risk of older people developing health problems. It may also prevent them from leaving their homes until the conditions have improved. Driving and even walking outside can become very hazardous, it is therefore very important to be safe and assess the situation when going out in snowy or icy conditions and think of those within your community that may be at risk during this weather.



When driving

- Only drive if it is safe to do so and the journey is absolutely necessary
- Listen to travel alerts on local radio before you leave, or check for disruptions that could affect your journey by visiting the Surrey County Council website Travel Disruptions page
 - Drive with care and according to the conditions

- Check the forecast before you leave to see if more snow is expected
- Carry supplies in your vehicle, such as a mobile phone, a wind up mobile phone charger, a blanket, food, water, a torch, a shovel, warm clothes, waterproofs, first aid kit and emergency contact list
- Check the highways agency website for advice on driving in snow and ice before you leave.

When going out

- Wear several layers of clothing and a hat
- Wear sensible shoes for the conditions
- Watch out for signs of hypothermia - uncontrollable shivering, slow/slurred speech, memory lapse and drowsiness.

At home

- Check on vulnerable neighbours, friends and relatives
- Keep supplies of salt and grit to keep your house clear of snow
- Assist older neighbours by clearing snow outside their home or get together with other members of the community to clear paths and community areas.

Industrial accidents

In Surrey there are industrial sites, storage depots, fuel and gas pipelines that all have the potential to cause a major fire or explosion. If you live close to a large chemical site, you might receive information from the site(s) in your area advising you of the actions to take in the event of an accident.

- If there is a large fire or smoke plume, go in and close your windows. Obey sirens if you hear them
- Listen to local radio and TV news for advice and information
- Stay inside until you are told it is safe or asked to evacuate by the emergency services
- Follow advice from the emergency services.

Transport incidents

Travel by air, rail, road or sea is safe, though accidents and emergencies do happen. If involved in a transport incident contact 999 and follow the advice of the emergency services.

Surrey is a major commuter county, with lots of motorway miles and major rail links into London and to the south coast. Any incident on the transport network can have a big knock on effect and it is not just the large events like a train crash that you could be impacted by. For example a large crash on the M25 can close off sections of the motorway, causing miles of tailbacks or an incident on the rail network can mean cancelled trains and commuters stuck miles away from home.



You should carry supplies in your car, such as water, some snacks and a blanket to keep you going if you get stuck, a mobile phone and a wind up mobile phone charger so you can call home.

Transport systems can be a target for terrorists, if you see anything say something, report all suspicious bags and packages to a member of staff – do not touch it.

Health related incidents

Contagious diseases can affect many people, causing mild illness, hospitalisation, or death in rare cases. It is therefore important to always follow good hygiene practices:

- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing and catch it in a tissue
- Dispose of the tissue in a bin as soon as possible
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap or an alcohol hand wash
- Keep work surfaces clean.



NHS

A pandemic happens when a completely new strain of flu virus develops which no one has built up any immunity against. As a result, the new flu strain spreads very rapidly and affects many people. The symptoms of pandemic flu are likely to be similar to seasonal flu but may be more severe and cause more complications. Health organisations in the UK are continually monitoring the risk of a new pandemic and will provide advice and mitigation methods in the event of one.

Terrorism

The threat of terrorism to the UK is very real, you should remain vigilant to the threat of terrorism and to report any activity you think is suspicious to the police.

- In an emergency call **999**
- If it is not urgent, call Surrey Police on **101**
- Alternatively, you can report suspicious activity to the confidential anti-terrorist hotline **0800 789 321**.

If there is a bomb alert

If there is a security incident involving a bomb near you, follow the instructions of the emergency services. In most cases, go inside a safe building and stay in until advised to do otherwise and listen to local news for information.

Terrorists need...

- *A place to live:* Are you suspicious about any tenants or guests?
- *To plan:* Have you seen anyone pay an unusual amount of attention to security measures at any location?
- *Money:* Individuals may set up bogus bank accounts, copy credit cards, return goods for large cash refunds.
- *Equipment:* If you are a retailer, do you have any cause to be suspicious about anything being bought?

Helping others in an emergency

First aid

Knowing what to do in an emergency is important and can save lives. Consider getting some first aid training and buying a first aid kit for your home and car. **St. John Ambulance** and **British Red Cross** both run first aid courses for the public.



If someone is injured, the following steps will keep them as safe as possible until professional help arrives:

- If people are seriously injured call **999** immediately
- Keep calm
- Make sure you and the injured person are not in danger
- Keep an eye on the injured person's condition until the emergency services arrive.

Vulnerable friends, relatives and neighbours

In an emergency it is important to consider the needs of those you know that are vulnerable.

If the conditions may prevent them from leaving their home, ensure to check on them if you are able to do so and see if they need anything. During an evacuation those with mobility problems may not be able to self evacuate, so try to assist them if it is safe to do so or alert the emergency services.



Utility companies have priority registers of vulnerable people who may need extra assistance during an emergency. During an emergency where utility supply is lost, your supplier may be able to ensure that your power is reconnected as a priority or send someone to check if you need any assistance. If you have special requirements, you may want to add your details to the priority register or if you know anyone that may be vulnerable you may want to encourage them to sign up too. These registers are particularly aimed at:

- Those who are blind or visually impaired
- Those who are deaf or have hearing difficulties
- Older people
- Those who rely on water or electricity supply for equipment such as a home dialysis machine, artificial ventilator, oxygen concentrator, stairlift or an adjustable bed.

Pets

In an incident it is possible that you may become separated from your pet. It is recommended that you micro-chip your pets so they can be reunited with you quickly, minimising distress to you and your pet. Micro-chipping can be done either by a Veterinary Surgeon or by your local RSPCA officer.

Our Household Emergency Plan

Where will we meet if we can't get into our home and can't contact each other?

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Who will pick the children up from school if we are unable to get there?

Name/s	Contact numbers

Who will look after our pets if we are unable to?

Name/s	Contact numbers

Who can we stay with if we are evacuated?

Name/s	Contact numbers

Where to turn off...

Gas

--

Water

--

Electricity

--

Grab Bag Checklist

In an emergency you may have to leave your home quickly, so it is important to have basic necessities to hand. Ideally, prepare a small easy-to-carry bag with essentials and store it in an accessible place ready to go. The emergency services may be very busy during a large emergency and may not be able to help you straight away; the items in your bag may also be useful under these circumstances. Here are some suggestions for your grab bag:

- Essential medications or details of prescriptions**
- Copies of important documents, such as insurance documents**
- Radio and spare batteries or wind up radio**
- Torch and spare batteries or wind up torch**
- List of contact numbers**
- Spare set of car and house keys**
- Disposable camera (to take pictures of any damage to your property)**
- Small amount of cash and credit/debit cards**
- First aid kit**
- Supplies for babies and small children**
- Basic toiletries, such as toothbrush, toothpaste and sanitary items**
- Antibacterial hand wash**
- Blanket(s) or sleeping bags**
- Glasses or contact lenses**
- Non perishable food items and bottles of water**
- Change of clothing**
- Sensible or waterproof shoes**
- Playing cards or games**
- Copy of this booklet**
- Candles and matches**
- Other family needs...**
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Emergency Contacts List

Emergency Services	Please dial 999 in an Emergency
Surrey County Council	03456 009 009
Borough/District/Parish Council	
Local Safer Neighbourhood Team	
NHS Direct	0845 46 47
Environment Agency Floodline	0845 988 1188
National Gas Emergency Service	0800 111 999
UK Power Networks Power cut number	0800 783 8866
Scottish and Southern Energy	08000 727 282
Water Supplier	
Gas Supplier	
Work	
Doctor	
School(s)	
Home Insurance	
Car Insurance	
Nominated Family Contact(s)	
Others	

Radio Stations

Station	Frequency	Coverage
BBC Surrey	104.6 FM & 104.0 FM	Surrey
Heart	102.7 FM	Reigate & Haslemere area
Kestrel	97.1 FM	South West area
Eagle Radio	96.4 FM	Guildford area
Radio Jackie	107.8 FM	North Surrey
Capital FM	95.8 FM	London and North Surrey
Magic	105.4 FM	London and North Surrey

Useful websites

UK Resilience	www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience
Environment Agency	www.environment-agency.gov.uk
Met Office	www.metoffice.gov.uk
Surrey County Council	www.surreycc.gov.uk
NHS Direct	www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
British Red Cross	www.redcross.org.uk
Surrey Alert	www.surreyalert.info
Public Services	www.direct.gov.uk
RSPCA	www.rspca.org.uk
St. John Ambulance	www.sja.org.uk

Additional Information

These pages are blank for you to add any further information or notes to your own household plan or you can use it for details for households for other family members who you may look after.

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Name/s	Contact numbers

Name/s	Contact numbers

Name/s	Contact numbers

