



EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS



ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY



EMERGENCIES

The greatest risk to the environment is that of pollution and the most immediate risk from the environment is one of flooding.

Effective planning and response to environmental risks is a primary aim of the Environment Agency. Our Emergency planning objectives are to:



Flooding

- Monitor** levels of rivers and sea
- Monitor** weather changes
- Forecast** rises in sea and river levels
- Warn** emergency services of danger
- Issue** timely flood warnings to those at risk so that self help can be achieved to safeguard people and property
- Advise** of risk and duration
- Control** flood water, where practicable

Water Pollution

- Monitor** water quality
- Secure** immediate advice of accidental spillages
- Investigate** source
- Secure** rapid assessment of risk
- Warn** abstractors and river users
- Advise** of risk and duration
- Control** pollution, where practicable



Waste

- Investigate** all emergencies at regulation waste management sites, including closed sites
- Investigate** all reports of illegal tipping
- Secure** immediate advice of spillages or release on land of chemicals from road, rail or air transport, storage container, pipeline or industrial process
- Secure** rapid assessment of risk
- Advise** on/secure clean up if necessary
- Secure** removal to temporary storage, if appropriate
- Secure** appropriate disposal or recovery

Radioactive

- At a nuclear licenced site**, to monitor substances in a major advisory capacity during and after the emergency
- In other cases**, to ensure that radioactive material is properly disposed of.



The Environment Agency is a public body whose task is to protect the environment in England and Wales, and to provide protection against flooding from rivers and the sea.

Created under the 1995 Environment Act it is responsible for a wide range of regulatory and statutory duties including:

Water Resources

Environmental Quality and Pollution Control

Flood Defence and Flood Warning

Fisheries

Conservation

Navigation and Recreation

Regulation of Waste and Land Contamination

Industrial Processes and Radioactive Substances

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY



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For more detailed information on these issues please contact the Public Relations Department of the Environment Agency, English Region at:

Langdon House, Crown Gardens, Southwark, PO1 2SR (Tel: 020 7275 1144)

The information in this leaflet refers specifically to the Environment Agency's responsibilities relating to the Environment Agency, English Region. It does not cover the responsibilities of other regions.

ANGLIAN REGION



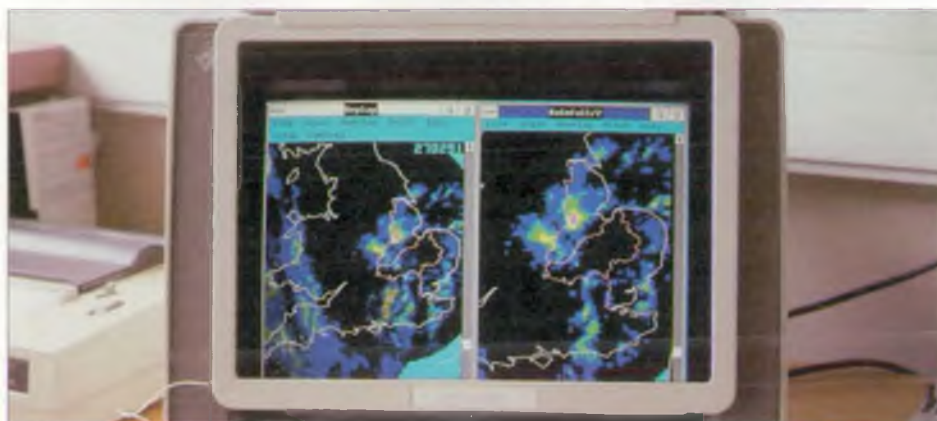
MONITORING

Although the nature of each emergency is different, the objectives for dealing with each are similar. They are to:

ASSESS

WARN

CONTROL



Data, either collected by the Agency's telemetry system or from a report made by a member of the public, will be used to make an assessment of the situation before issuing warnings in accordance with predetermined procedures. Manpower and equipment will be deployed to control the incident as far as it is humanly possible. This demands:

The application of modern technology in the fields of data measurement, transmission, storage and interpretation.

Detailed emergency procedures.

Trained and equipped personnel led by experienced managers close to and familiar with the locations at risk.



However, the Agency alone cannot deal with all aspects of environmental emergencies. A full response is dependent upon co-ordinated action with other bodies such as the Fire Service. Local Authorities (and, in some low lying areas, Internal Drainage Boards) and water companies (for flooding from blocked drains), will also be responsible for dealing with localised flood emergencies outside of the Agency's responsibility of main rivers.

Pollution emergencies are generally more localised and rarely impact directly on the public at large. Agency warnings are accordingly targeted at groups having direct interest in the locality - eg public water supply abstractors, fishery and agricultural interests. Close liaison is maintained with public health officials. The Fire Service is an important point of contact because it will alert the Agency to the accidental spillages of chemicals on highways or fire involving chemicals, all of which have the potential to cause serious environmental damage.



FLOODING

THE AGENCY AND FLOOD DEFENCE

The Agency's aims for flood defence are:
to provide effective defence for people and property against flooding from rivers and the sea, and
to provide adequate arrangements for flood forecasting and warning.

To achieve these aims the Agency spends over £200m each year and employs over 3,000 staff on flood defence work in its eight Regions. The work carried out includes:

- providing and operating a flood warning service**
- maintaining main river channels and flood defence structures**
- building new flood defences where required**

THE AGENCY FLOOD WARNING SERVICE

The Agency's Flood Warning Service, operating through its eight Regions, and initiated in Anglian Region by Area teams comprises:

Monitoring weather forecasts, weather radar, rainfall, river and tidal levels on a continuous 24 hour basis - to detect and forecast possible flooding incidents. Issuing flood warnings to the Police, Local Authorities, other emergency services and the operation of sophisticated electronic equipment to give direct warnings to the public and commercial interests.

The Flood Warning Service has THREE warning phases (Yellow, Amber and Red) each of which is associated with increasing flood risk. They are described below.



Yellow Phase - flooding is possible

Conditions giving rise to concern.

In the tidal situation some wind blown spray is forecast.

In the fluvial situation the catchment is in a state susceptible to flooding (eg due to rising river levels and/or imminent rainfall on a saturated catchment).

For embanked channels, level will be significantly above normal and is forecast to approach design water level.

Minor flooding of roads and flooding of low lying agricultural land is forecast.

No property flooding is expected.



Amber Phase - flooding is likely

Flooding to a number of roads and considerable areas of agricultural land is forecast with the possibility of flooding to some isolated high risk properties.

For tidal situations some isolated flooding can be expected but problems will mainly be due to wind blown spray.

For embanked channels design water levels are forecast to be exceeded.



Red Phase - serious flooding is likely

A full flood situation is forecast to develop with flooding to a significant number of properties, to roads and to large areas of agricultural land.

POLLUTION

The responsibility for enforcing legislation governing pollution of air, land and water rests with the Environment Agency. The knowledge, experience and professionalism of the Agency's staff is the key to a successful response to pollution incidents.

We encourage telephone calls from the public who may become aware of pollution or a risk to the environment. We respond to such calls promptly, night or day. Speed is essential and our 24 hour Regional Communications Centre is a vital element in our response.

We also rely upon being called by the emergency services to the scene of incidents involving the spillage or loss of dangerous substances or chemicals. This may be as a result of a road accident or a fire and close liaison with the Fire Services and the police is most essential.



The Agency's response to a pollution event will vary dependent upon circumstances. Visible pollution on water, for example an oil spillage, can be dealt with in two ways. Absorbent materials can be used to soak it up or a boom can be placed across a river or stream to restrict its spread prior to removal. In those incidents where pollution is seriously affecting the oxygen content of the river, special aerating equipment can be used to oxygenate the water thus protecting fish and wildlife.

Where possible every attempt is made to prevent lost or spilled substances from entering the water environment by containment of the spillage. In conjunction with the emergency services, specialist resources, including local authorities and waste contractors, can be called upon to contain, absorb, neutralise and/or remove for disposal the substances concerned. If necessary, as an interim measure, the Agency can direct the material, once made safe, to the nearest, suitably licensed waste management facility for temporary storage. This may be particularly important in cases where unidentified materials are illegally disposed of.





Pollution incidents occurring at sea are principally dealt with by the Marine Pollution Control Unit of the Department of Trade and Industry, but where pollution originating offshore affects estuaries and the coast, then this is handled in conjunction with harbour and local authorities. The Agency is also responsible for tracing the source of pollution and depending upon the nature of the incident a decision will be taken as to whether or not to prosecute the individual or organisation concerned.

The Agency's input into the management of air quality includes the regulation of industries with the greatest potential for environmental pollution. Integrated Pollution Control (IPC) of these industries by the Agency limits not only their emissions to atmosphere but also their disposals of wastes to water and land. We also regulate the holding of radioactive substances and the disposal of radioactive waste.

The Environment Agency is not specifically responsible for dealing with the possible impact of a pollution on the public at large. Public health is the responsibility of local authority environmental health officers and matters of public safety are dealt with by the Police and other emergency services.

GENERAL EMERGENCY

Anglian Region has developed a 24 hour service throughout

24 HOUR
CONTACT
ARRANGEMENTS

the year to deal with emergencies. Central to this service is our **REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE** at Peterborough which is constantly manned to receive reports of emergencies and to pass them immediately to one of our specialist duty officers on call at any time of the day or night.

Staff who respond to and investigate emergencies are based throughout the Anglian Region in order to ensure that they are close to hand and familiar with their locality. The basic organisation reflects this important principle through our network of offices:



During the working day emergencies may be reported to any of the Agency's offices (see map on reverse for telephone numbers). Outside of office hours the same arrangements apply as a call to an Area Office will be automatically transferred to the Regional Communications Centre at no extra cost when the switchboard is unmanned.

The details of emergency calls will be relayed to our catchment based staff who will investigate the report. Catchment staff spend most of their time in the field but will be contacted via a region wide mobile radio network if necessary. They may wish to speak with a caller personally regarding the emergency so the name and telephone number is always requested.

The general public act as the eyes and ears of the Environment Agency throughout the 27,000 km² it covers in Anglian Region. The prompt reports of a pollution event can help protect the environment from widespread damage.





ANGLIAN REGION ADDRESSES

REGIONAL OFFICE

Environment Agency
Kingfisher House
Goldhay Way
Orton Goldhay
Peterborough PE2 5ZR
Tel: 01733 371 811
Fax: 01733 231 840

NORTHERN AREA

Environment Agency
Waterside House
Waterside North
Lincoln LN2 5HA
Tel: 01522 513 100
Fax: 01522 512 927

CENTRAL AREA

Environment Agency
Bromholme Lane
Brampton
Huntingdon PE18 8NE
Tel: 01480 414 581
Fax: 01480 413 381

EASTERN AREA

Environment Agency
Cobham Road
Ipswich IP3 9JE
Tel: 01473 727 712
Fax: 01473 724 205



Floodcall is a 24 hour recorded information service providing details of flooding across England and Wales. All calls are charged at local rates.

**ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
 F L O O D C A L L
 0645 88 11 88**

For general enquiries please call your local Environment Agency office. If you are unsure who to contact, or which is your local office, please call our general enquiry line.

**ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
 GENERAL ENQUIRY LINE
 0645 333 111**

The 24-hour emergency hotline number for reporting all environmental incidents relating to air, land and water.

**ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
 EMERGENCY HOTLINE
 0800 80 70 60**



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