



Guidance
notes for FM

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FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE



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> Flood Risk Management Guidance

In Association with RISKCENTRIC

Flood risk is increasing: whether it's caused by climate change or building on flood plains the simple facts are that flooding is becoming more frequent and more intense.

Statistics issued by the Environment Agency on the effects on businesses make grim reading:

- > Businesses are more likely to be flooded than burnt down and the cost of flood damage is on average four times greater than fire damage**
- > Costs related to flooded businesses average between £75,000 and £112,000**
- > During the 2012 floods, businesses lost £200 million, £84 million of which was property damage with the remainder being consequential damage, such as loss of business and staff absence**

However, high or low your flood risk, there are various measures you can take to help reduce the damage to your business. The most obvious issues are storing valuable items higher up and making your property more resistant to flooding. Defining clear roles and responsibilities for activities such as monitoring flood situations as well as a clear process for sharing and acting upon this information will ensure that your organisation responds and undertakes its planned response activities effectively.

RiskCentric has collaborated with BIFM to provide this guidance note. Our emphasis has been to identify and incorporate into this document the practical steps that will ensure BIFM members are equipped to protect their business from flood damage.

RiskCentric provide services, solutions and training for compliance and business continuity management.



For further information please visit
www.riskcentric.co.uk

> Flood Risk Management Guidance

For most businesses, flood risk management can be broken down into three distinct phases:

> **Preventing flood water from entering your premises**

If you know your property is in an area that could flood, acquire protection equipment and prepare your property well in advance to reduce the risk of flood water getting inside. Sealing doors, windows and openings with permanent or removable barriers will hold back flood waters up to 1 metre high and allow you time to undertake other activities and deal with other issues.

Brick walls can be made more flood resistant by regularly inspecting pointing, ensuring that it is in good order and by applying water-proof sealant to prevent absorption and air bricks, while forming an essential function of ventilation under normal circumstances will provide an entry point for water in flood conditions: fitting flood-proof air bricks or specially designed covers that are easy to fit over air bricks when flooding is expected can mitigate this risk.

> **Reducing flood damage if water does enter your building**

There always the risk, that no matter what precautions have been taken, these can be overwhelmed and flood water may enter your premises. In this case, damage limitation is the best approach and this generally involves moving assets and equipment out of harm's way. Remember that this may also require some preparatory activities such as acquiring racking so that, if flooding is imminent items can be raised above anticipated flood levels.

Reducing the likelihood of damage reduces the immediate financial impact of a flood but can also reduce the impact on your business where some types of equipment and stock are subject to lengthy replacement lead times (bear in mind that if flooding is widespread, demand for many items will also soar, creating temporary shortages and price distortions). If the nature of the building permits, raising electrical sockets, electrical wiring/ controls for ventilation systems can significantly reduce damage to the fabric of the building.

> **Being Prepared for Flood Clean-up**

Anticipating health and safety issues as well as some of the issues you may encounter with insurance claims and premises security following a flood will ensure that your clean-up and recovery activities can be conducted safely and effectively.

Although floods can be damaging and traumatic, organisations that have thought through threat mitigation and response approaches and have factored flood specific measures into the business continuity arrangements can save up to 90% of the cost of lost/damaged stock.

> Flood Mitigation

Flood Threat	Preparation	Responsibility
> Warnings	Establish flood warning information sources	
> Communication	Establish communications strategies for incident management, staff & customers	
> Windows, doors & other openings (i.e. airbricks)	Acquire BSI accredited flood barriers. Sandbags and plastic sheeting on hand.	
> Drainage	Install non-return valves, foams to holes	
> Electrical Sockets	Move higher up walls if possible	
> Tables, chairs	Strong plastic bags around tables/chairs, stand legs in tall plastic vases	
> Chemicals (i.e. cleaning products)	Identify storage locations that are likely to be well above water level. Consider having temporary racking available that can be assembled when a flood warning is received	
> Oil based products (i.e. gasoline, cooking oil)		
> Computers, printers and other peripherals		
> Other electrical items		
> Paper documents > Filing cabinets > Stationery > Customer stock		
> Company and Staff vehicles	Identify higher ground locations for temporary parking. Plan transport logistics to/from temporary parking locations	
> Staff involved in clean-up	Ensure protective clothing and equipment for clean-up is available	
	Ensure that you know how long it will take to construct, install and perform response activities.	

> Flood Response Plan

Action	Responsibility
> Put staff and customers on alert	
> Ensure insurance policies and relevant contact details are close to hand	
> Commence protection of windows, doors and other openings with selected flood barriers	
> Place strong plastic bags around the legs of tables/chairs or move to higher location	
> Commence Equipment shutdown and protection activities	
> Commence construction of temporary racking/shelving	
> Switch off electricity at the main supply	
> Move the following items to storage location that are above the expected flood level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Chemicals (i.e. cleaning products) > Oil based products (i.e. gasoline, cooking oil) > Computers, printers and other peripherals > Other electrical items > Paper documents > Filing cabinets > Stationery > Customer stock 	
> Commence movement of company and staff vehicles to safe locations	

> Post Flood Plan

Activity	Action	Responsibility
> Insurance	If damage to insured property and equipment has occurred, contact your insurer.	
	Seek guidance before disposing of anything and keep photographic/ video evidence	
> Health and Safety during clean-up	Ensure that the building is structurally sound before entering and commencing clean-up work. Ensure that personnel involved are issued with protective clothing as necessary	
	Ensure that any biohazards, contaminants, etc. have been considered	
	Exercise great caution when dealing with debris to avoid coming into direct contact with contaminated rubbish or sharp objects.	
	Ensure surfaces are disinfected and that any disinfectant solutions are used in accordance with the manufacturers' recommended instructions.	
	If flood water has disturbed rodents a pest control contractor should be engaged.	
	Do not touch any electrical equipment which is in or near water.	
	Do not operate any electrical equipment until advised that it is safe to do so.	
	Engage an approved electrical contractor before using damaged electrical equipment or installations.	
	Arrange for a Gas-safe registered engineer to inspect any gas appliances before using any gas powered equipment again.	
	If you smell gas, or suspect gas has escaped, call the National Gas Emergency Service immediately (0800 111 999).	
Ensure any taps that have been submerged in contaminated flood water are cleaned up using bleach solution and run them for 30 seconds prior to using any water.		
Consider whether specialist assistance is required for air conditioning equipment, lifts, hoists, swimming pools and chemicals.		
> Building Security	Re-evaluate physical security arrangements as alarm systems may not be functioning and buildings may need to be left open during salvage and restoration activities.	

Flood Risk Checklist

This document was produced by the British Institute of Facilities Managers (BIFM), the BIFM Risk and Business Continuity Special Interest Group (SIG) and RiskCentric.

The BIFM Risk & Business Continuity SIG has four major aims:

- 1.** Provide BIFM members with a wider choice of CPD events in the field of risk, compliance and business continuity.
- 2.** Reflect current thinking that business continuity, compliance and risk are all inter-related issues.
- 3.** Further recognise the broad base of issues and disciplines that are covered within FM which include risk and business continuity.
- 4.** Provide a forum for the promotion and exchange of best practices related to physical risk management, regulatory compliance and business continuity.

*While all due care is taken in writing and producing this guidance note, BIFM does not accept any liability for the accuracy of the contents or any opinions expressed herein.

For further information on the BIFM Risk & Business Continuity SIG, visit www.bifm.org.uk/security

About BIFM

The British Institute of Facilities Management (BIFM) is the professional body for Facilities Management (FM). Founded in 1993, we promote excellence in facilities management for the benefit of practitioners, the economy and society. Supporting and representing over 15,000 members around the world, both individual FM professionals and organisations, and thousands more through qualifications and training. We promote and embed professional standards in facilities management. Committed to advancing the facilities management profession we provide a suite of membership, qualifications, training and networking services designed to support facilities management practitioners in performing to the best of their ability.

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