

The Environment Agency is working with Beer Parish Council and Beer Emergency Response Team (BERT), to help Beer's community become resilient to the risk of flash flooding.

Flash flooding is caused by intense rainfall. It occurs suddenly, with little or no warning – often before emergency services arrive. Flash flooding can be very destructive: flooding homes, moving rocks, tearing out trees, sweeping away vehicles and damaging buildings, walls and bridges. This is similar to the type of flooding that happened in Beer in August 2004, where a thunderstorm caused major surface runoff through Beer.

Flash flooding can also happen where drainage systems are unable to cope with extreme rainfall.

The Environment Agency have recently undertaken a study to identify areas at risk of flash flooding. The study confirmed that Beer is a location that may be at risk from this type of flooding.

We are working together to mitigate the impacts of a flash flood for Beer. Key to this is awareness raising within the community as well the development of Beer's Emergency Plan.

Flooding in Beer is commonly caused by a combination of fluvial flooding and surface water runoff from the valley sides, so we are currently exploring whether we could locate and provide a rain gauge within the Beer catchment. The rain gauge could notify the community of an intense rainfall incident, which could trigger Beer's Emergency Plan and warnings to residents and businesses to prepare for flooding. We will keep you updated as this progresses.

In the meantime, there are lots of things you can do to prepare for flooding to minimise the risk to people and property e.g. moving valuables and family mementos upstairs, moving cars to higher ground, or businesses moving stock and equipment to protect it from floodwater. You could also prepare a flood kit in advance.

For further information, you can visit the Environment Agency's website, email dc.flood@environment-agency.gov.uk or speak to us by phoning 03708 506 506 and ask to speak to 'Flood Resilience Devon'.

Flood Kit:

- Important documents - such as passport and insurance certificates. Some documents are expensive to replace. Having these in your kit will keep them safe and to hand.
- Torch - in case it floods at night and your power is affected.
- Radio - a wind-up or battery radio will help you monitor local news and weather broadcasts for the latest flooding situation.
- Batteries - have spare batteries available to power your torch or radio.
- Blankets or warm clothing - it may be cold and you could be without power for some time.
- First aid kit - keep a first aid kit to hand in case of minor injuries. Put any prescription medication in your kit so that you have easy access to it.
- Bottled water - flood water can contain sewage, chemicals and animal waste. Drinking bottle water will keep you hydrated and make sure your water hasn't been contaminated by the flood water.
- Tinned food - you don't know how long the flood will last. Have tinned and non-perishable food available for you to eat.
- Personal items - some items are irreplaceable. Put items of personal value such as photos, family videos or treasured mementos in your flood kit so that they are safe.
- Mobile phone - keep a fully charged mobile with you so that you can contact people in an emergency or call for help. If your phone has Internet access you can use it to check on the latest flood situation.
- Waterproof clothing - keep wellies and rubber gloves available should you need to enter the flood water.