



## WORKING IN FLOODED AREAS

This bulletin replaces issue 01. The red text shows changes from the first issue. Please note that some links in this message may not work for contractors.

### OVERVIEW

Flooding can increase the number of risks posed to field staff, including the potential for severe injury or drowning, therefore staff working near water need to be vigilant.

### DETAIL

Below is guidance for working near floodwater, and the additional precautions to be adopted.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

- Follow the guidance detailed in this briefing.
- Refer to HSS 01 038 Management of Risks When Working on or Near Water.
- Refer to HSS 40 023 Energisation of Networks following Faults and Emergencies.
- If in any doubt about how to work near flooded areas - stay away. Stop and seek advice.

- Refer to the latest traffic information to determine whether your route is affected by flooding. If you come across a flooded road when driving, avoid entering it whenever possible. Only attempt to cross if there are no alternative routes and you can reasonably assess that it is safe to do so i.e. it is standing water and other vehicles of a similar type and size are crossing without difficulty.
- Drivers should refer to their specific vehicle manual for exact wading depths for crossing standing water. Water depths and flow rates need to be assessed before entering any standing flood water.
- No person is to enter standing water over a depth of 300mm (12"). **All water entry should be assisted by the Fire Service or with NORLSAR (Norfolk Lowland Search and Rescue, in the EPN trial area).**
- **Never enter moving water on foot and never enter a body of water unaccompanied.**
- **The use of [lifejackets](#) and [rescue throwing line](#) must be available and used, where a Pre-Work or Point of Work Assessment identifies the possibility of falling into water (within 3m of water).**
- Undertake a Point of Work Assessment before starting any activity near flood waters. Regularly revisit, review and rebrief the POWA, ensuring that the working party are aware that the situation may change rapidly and be prepared to take action.
- Slips, trips and fall hazards are significantly increased in flood conditions. Always choose routes that avoid flooded areas and remain on solid ground (roads and paths avoiding gardens and grassed areas as shortcuts). Be aware that manhole covers may have been dislodged leaving an unseen hazard.
- Guidance is given in [HSS 01 038 Management of Risks When Working On or Near Water](#), on how to manage activities near bodies of water.



- All users of lifejackets and rescue throw lines should make themselves familiar with the TechTube videos that demonstrate the proper inspection, donning, and use of an automatic inflatable life vest and the proper inspection and safe use of a rescue throw line when working on or near water.
- Should an individual fall into water, whether or not they are wearing a lifejacket, rescue options must consider both the safety of the rescuer and the casualty. A rescue strategy should be as follows:
  - Maintain verbal contact with the person in the water and explain what you are going to do, and what you need them to do.
  - Use anything that is readily available to help pull the casualty to the bank i.e. a sash line or insulated rods – do not enter the water yourself.
  - Throw anything that may be usable as a buoyancy aid, for example an empty [water container](#).
  - If you cannot rescue the person yourself or they have been injured, call the emergency services for assistance.
  - Be prepared to administer first aid.
- Never use unapproved boats or other watercraft to access flood waters.
- Structures, including poles and towers may have been affected by flooding, footings may have been weakened or material strengths reduced / deteriorated due to immersion in the flood waters. Be especially careful with poles and towers close to watercourses that may have had supporting material washed away.
- Our electrical assets, from EHV/HV equipment in substations through to LV apparatus and domestic service terminations may have been affected by the flooding, either from partial immersion or being fully submerged in the flood waters. There is the obvious risk of failure resulting in fire or explosion and electrical discharge from distressed equipment. Guidance is given in section 8.3 of [HSS 40 023 Energisation of Networks following Faults and Emergencies](#), as to how to deal with apparatus and plant that has been subjected to flood waters.
- There may be an additional toxicity and biohazard risk from water-borne agents (e.g. chemical spill, sewage). Make sure appropriate PPE is worn to avoid contact with flood water where possible and practice good hygiene habits
- In an emergency, the Fire and Rescue Service have a duty of care to help UKPN to access assets through flooded areas, when not responding to life-threatening calls.

<b>Primary communication via Line Manager complete by (X)</b>	1 week	2 weeks	X	1 month
<b>Additional communication (X)</b>	Learning points	1 <sup>st</sup> 15		Team Brief slide
Line management must ensure appropriate employees understand the content of this document within the timescale shown. This document is subject to compliance audits after the communication deadline.				