

EA South West Box 11

Flood Warning Information

For Portland (Chiswell)



Please keep this leaflet safe.
It contains important information
about flood warning
arrangements in your area



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Flood Warning Service Portland (Chiswell)

The flood warning service for Portland (Chiswell) in Dorset is operated from the Environment Agency Regional Office at Exeter.

The service alerts residents of sea conditions which MAY cause flooding in sufficient time for them to take preventative action to protect their property and belongings.

The flood warning service also alerts Weymouth and Portland Borough Council and the Police who put staff on standby.

Background

Portland (Chiswell) is at risk of flooding as a result of storm waves washing over the esplanade and Chesil Bank, or by percolation of sea water through Chesil Bank. In both cases, water will flow along roads and accumulate in low spots in Chiswell and along the causeway (Weymouth Road). Property can be flooded either directly by flood water, or as a result of wash water if traffic continues to travel through it.

In addition, wind blown spray, shingle and waves may directly affect some properties, depending on their location. The depth of flood water accumulating and the number of properties affected will vary, depending on the severity of the storm and the length of time that conditions persist.

Flood defences have been constructed to reduce the frequency and impact of flooding in Chiswell, however, they have not removed the possibility of flooding.

Flooding can still be expected on average every five years. Sometimes flooding could be more frequent than this.

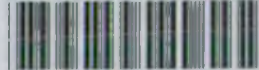
What warnings are issued?

The Agency operates a colour coded flood warning system. The colour tells you the expected severity of sea conditions and flooding. Yellow warnings are the least severe, red warnings are the most severe.

EA Southwest 197-6



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Yellow

Flood Warning

What does a yellow flood warning mean?

A yellow warning is issued when forecasts indicate that a combination of high tide levels, storm surge and wave conditions are likely to result in at least wind blown spray coming over the esplanade and Chesil Bank.

A warning is issued, if possible, 6-12 hours ahead of the high tide concerned. Warnings may apply to several consecutive high tides. It is unlikely that such conditions will cause any disruption to residents.

Details of high tide times will be available by ringing the Environment Agency Floodcall Warning Information Line.

How will a yellow warning be issued?

Residents will be advised that a yellow warning has been issued by a recorded message phone call. Where residents are not on the phone a 'good neighbour' system is in place where a neighbour will pass the message on.

Every attempt will be made to issue yellow warnings during waking hours (7am - 10pm) to avoid unnecessary disturbance.

A **white flag**, with wording **FLOOD WARNING**, will be raised in Victoria Square when a yellow warning is first issued and will remain flying until all warnings are stood down. The flag will **NOT** be lowered in between tides if warnings are in place for consecutive tides.

What should you do when a yellow warning is issued?

On receiving a yellow warning, residents are advised to take basic precautionary measures so that they are prepared in case the situation should worsen. Such measures could include installing flood boards in doorways. Residents should be aware that conditions can deteriorate very rapidly at Portland and the time available to issue more severe warnings of serious flooding can be very short.

In the majority of cases, when a yellow warning is issued, the tide will pass without any serious problems.

Why do some warnings appear to be false alarms?

Yellow warnings are issued on forecasts up to 12 hours ahead of the high tide. The reliability of the warning is dependent on the accuracy of the forecast received from the Meteorological Office. Forecast conditions do not always materialise, and sometimes warnings will be issued for tides when conditions turn out to be less severe than expected.

Amber

Flood Warning

What does an amber flood warning mean?

An amber warning is issued when sea conditions are such that either waves are expected to come over the esplanade and Chesil Bank or percolation of water through Chesil Bank is detected. This could cause some minor flooding to roads but significant property flooding is not expected at this stage. Local flood bailiffs and Environment Agency staff will be monitoring conditions at Chiswell.

An amber warning means that the situation is getting potentially serious and could worsen very quickly. Weymouth and Portland Borough Council and the Police will be advised and will move manpower onto the island. Amber warnings are usually issued 3-4 hours ahead of a high tide.

In most cases, when an amber warning is issued the high tide will pass without any serious disruption to the residents of Chiswell.

How will an amber warning be issued?

If the warning is issued during waking hours (7am - 10pm), residents will receive a further telephone message that an amber warning has been issued. Because an amber warning is primarily for putting the emergency services on standby, unnecessary disruption to residents will be avoided.

Amber warnings will be issued to local radio, which for most tides will coincide with breakfast and teatime broadcasts.

What should you do when an amber warning is issued?

When an amber warning is issued there is still no **definite** risk of flooding. Residents may choose to reconsider their travel plans if intending to leave the island. A commonsense approach should be taken and will depend on the individual circumstances. The latest information on weather conditions and flood risk will be passed on to the local radio stations and will be available on the Floodcall information service.



Red

Flood Warning

What does a red warning mean?

A red flood warning is issued when the Environment Agency believes that there is a strong possibility that serious flooding will occur. This will either be due to severe wave conditions coming over the esplanade and Chesil Bank or because large quantities of water are detected percolating through Chesil Bank.

The Agency must assess all the above factors, together with the state of the tide and forecast wind and wave conditions and decide if a red warning should be issued in sufficient time to enable residents to take necessary action.

Experience has shown that **the risk remains up to two hours after high tide** and that a falling tide is not a guarantee of improved conditions.

How will a red warning be issued?



The two flood warning sirens in Victoria Square and next to the United Reformed Church will be sounded as follows:

- A constant sound for 10 minutes;
- A repeating, two minutes on, two minutes off, for a further 10 minutes.

What should you do when a red warning is issued?

Residents are advised to take any action they consider appropriate to prevent damage to their property and belongings. This may include moving carpets, furniture and other items from the ground floor, upstairs.

You should also have a supply of warm clothing, waterproofs, a torch, and battery powered radio available, and spare batteries.

If water enters your property you should turn off gas and electricity supplies. These should not be turned on again until they have been checked for safety.

EVACUATION if serious flooding occurs

IF the evacuation of property is considered necessary, the police and other emergency services will alert residents.

Further information on these arrangements is available from Weymouth and Portland Borough Council.

How can I obtain other information on warnings?

Floodcall Warning Information Line

Telephone 0645 88 11 88 (local call rate) and listen for information on rivers and the coast in your county and district or unitary authority area. This is a recorded information service which provides regular updated information on flood warnings in your area.

Information for Chiswell (Portland) is available from the system by requesting information on the Dorset Coast. Warnings for other locations along the coast will also be listed, ie West Bay, Christchurch etc.

Our 'dial and listen' service will tell you whether there are yellow, amber or red warnings in force and for coastal warnings may give the time of the high tide and some information on wind and wave conditions.

The Quick Dial Code

To quickly access information on the Dorset Coast (including Chiswell) the Quick Dial Code is 0444.

If you have a touch tone telephone (a phone which makes a tone in your ear when you press a button) telephone Floodcall on 0645 88 11 88 and when the recorded message begins use your code 0444. This will enable you to listen to flood warning information for the Dorset Coast straight away.

Your particular phone may not be able to use the Quick Dial option. For example, if you have a dial phone or your push button phone does not have touch tone - you will need to follow the instructions as they are given when you go through the messages.

If no warnings are in force in your area, the message will state this.

Local Radio

Flood warnings will be broadcast by most local BBC and commercial radio stations, at the time of issue and in news bulletins. Residents are advised to tune into local radio to keep up to date with latest information when flood warnings are in force.

BBC Radio Solent	103.8 FM
Wessex FM	96.0/97.2 FM
2CR	102.3 FM



SOUTH WEST REGION ADDRESSES

REGIONAL OFFICE

(and Devon Area until Dec 31, 1997)
Environment Agency
South West Region
Manley House
Kestrel Way
Exeter EX2 7LQ
Tel: 01 392 444 000

Fax: 01 392 444 238

DEVON AREA

Manley House
Kestrel Way
Exeter EX2 7LQ
Tel: 01 392 444 000



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NATIONAL LIBRARY & INFORMATION SERVICE

SOUTH WEST REGION

Manley House, Kestrel Way,
Exeter EX2 7LQ

CORNWALL AREA

Environment Agency
Sir John Moore House
Victoria Square
Bodmin PL31 1EB
Tel: 01 208 78301
Fax: 01 208 78321

NORTH WESSEX AREA

Environment Agency
Rivers House
East Quay
Bridgwater TA6 4YS
Tel: 01 278 457 333
Fax: 01 278 452 985

SOUTH WESSEX AREA

Environment Agency
Rivers House
Business Park
Wafesbury Road
Blandford DT11 8ST
Tel: 01 252 8456 080
Fax: 01 252 8455 998



For 24-hour information and advice on flood warnings in England and Wales, call:

**ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
F L O O D C A L L**

0645 88 11 88

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

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



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