



## **Advice for businesses affected by flooding**

### **If your business has been hit by flood water...**

**Contact your broker or insurer:** A lot of business insurance is sold via an insurance broker so if you used one when arranging your insurance, you should contact them in the first instance. They'll advise you about what evidence you'll need to support your claim. It's generally a good idea to take photos of any damaged property. In situations where a building has been particularly badly damaged, an insurer may be able to look into the possibility of providing alternative business premises for a time.

**Stay safe:** Although it can be tough to see your business under water, take care before going into the premises to try to salvage equipment or documents. Make sure electricity and gas supplies are turned off and that you're not exposing yourself to dangerous debris or contaminated water.

**Assessing the damage:** If the building or contents - including stock and equipment - have been badly damaged, your broker or insurer may appoint someone to help assess the damage, once it is safe to enter the building. It's worth gathering evidence of your accounts so your insurer can make progress with interim payments to keep your cash flow going.

**Cleaning and stripping out:** Your loss adjuster should organise the cleaning and stripping out of your business. Remember, a loss adjuster is there to help you.

**Disinfecting and drying out:** They should also appoint a drying company to disinfect and fully dry out the building. This process can take from a few weeks to several months depending on the extent of water damage.

**Getting you back up and trading:** A builder will be appointed to undertake repair and reconstruction work, or you can talk to your insurer about using a company of your choice, once a certificate is issued by the drying out company. Antibacterial and antifungal treatments will be included. There will also be an opportunity to talk to your insurer about whether you want to upgrade any of your damaged equipment rather than simply having it replaced.

**Moving back in:** Your insurer or loss adjuster will discuss with you when it is safe for you to return. In some cases this may be several months or more than a year later, particularly if major reconstruction work is required.

### **It's not just buildings and stock which could be covered...**

Businesses that have suffered flooding, and others which are not under water but are suffering disruption, may have insurance to help with a range of issues beyond damage to property and stock. This is called **business interruption cover** and it can help with:

- **Paying salaries:** Make sure employees are paid while your business is out of action.
- **Loss of profit:** If you are able to continue trading there may still be a shortfall, for example perhaps business is down by 25% or 50%. The amount of the downturn may be recoverable.
- **Increased cost of working:** To enable you to trade effectively you may have extra costs such as additional advertising to make it clear you are still open, or temporary facilities.
- **Denial of access:** For example if you see a fall in trade because of road closures, or cannot get to your premises.
- **Supply chain problems:** Where a crucial business which supplies you with goods or parts is taken out of action.

Check your policy to see what you're covered for, or speak to the insurer or broker you bought your cover from.