



After the Floods

Fact Sheet

As the floods recede and Cumbria begins to enter recovery stage, Cumbria Police, Cumbria County Council's Community Safety Team and Trading Standards Service are working together to call on all residents and businesses to be particularly alert to any suspicious activity around homes, businesses and vehicles which have been damaged or abandoned as a result of the flooding.

The information contained in this leaflet is designed to give advice to those affected by the floods to help them through the recovery period.

Guarding Against Crime

- If you have had to leave your home and/or vehicle you are advised to make them as secure as possible by locking windows and doors and removing valuables if you can do so safely.
- Keep an eye on your neighbours' properties too, and be alert to any suspicious activity especially around those premises that are left empty during the clear up and renovation works.
- You are reminded to be aware of doorstep callers who may use the opportunity to trick their way into your property. They will use a variety of tactics to cheat people out of their money and/or steal items from their properties. They may for instance say they are checking the water, gas or electricity supply and need to turn it off because there is a leak further down the road.
- Always ask for identification before allowing anyone into your property and make a note of their name, address and telephone number. If in any doubt do not let them in.
- If the trader is aggressive or you feel at all threatened you can call the **Police on 101**.

Cold Callers and Bogus Workmen

- If you are a victim of the floods you are warned to be wary of opportunist workmen who may turn up unannounced and attempt to pressurise you into paying an exorbitant amount for substandard or very little work.
- People who are uninsured are particularly at risk from callers arriving and offering to repair damaged property, redecorate, and/or carry out electrical work, etc.
- If you are insured contact your insurance company before arranging any repairs, they may have approved traders who will carry out the work for you.
- If you arrange your own repairs you are advised to always use tradesmen who have been recommended or who have reliable reputations.
- Trading Standards and the Police are to carry out joint patrols in affected areas to check the identity and authenticity of traders.
- If you are approached by bogus or suspicious tradesmen you should contact **Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline immediately on 03454 040506.**
More help and general guidance can be found on their website www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Crime Prevention Advice

- When seeking a trader talk to family, friends and neighbours to get recommendations.
- Look for a trader who is a member of an approved code scheme.
- Consider getting written quotes (not estimates) from at least three traders.
- Consider making staged payments and keeping back a significant part of the cost until the work has been satisfactorily completed.
- For further advice you can speak to the **Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 040506.**

Action Fraud

- Fraudsters will target people in Cumbria regardless of where they are based. By working together Action Fraud and Cumbria Constabulary will be able to offer a better level of service to the public and, ultimately, bring more offenders to justice.
- If you think you have been a victim of fraud you can contact **Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or textphone 0300 123 2050.**

Vehicle Security Advice

- If possible move your vehicle to a secure area.
- Check that all windows and doors are locked and secured.
- Remove all valuable items from the vehicle.
- If you have a works van do not leave tools or equipment on view – remove them and consider leaving a notice on the windscreen that no tools are stored in the vehicle.
- If there are any items (eg power tools) you are not able to remove consider applying a security marking product or embossing them with identifiable marks.
- For further advice visit:
www.cumbria.police.uk