



Nottinghamshire
County Council
Community Services

Trading Standards

Information

Planning for an emergency

There are several steps you can take now to make sure that any household emergency you have in the future is not a disaster.

1. Find out where your water stopcock and gas and electricity mains switches are NOW. If an emergency happens, the first thing you should do is turn off the relevant supply -this should prevent any further damage.
2. Find reliable traders you can call on in an emergency. Ask friends and relatives to recommend someone and look for membership of a trade association. Check whether they really are members by telephoning the trade association - addresses and telephone numbers can be found in the OFT leaflet "Home Improvements" or from the Trading Standards Advice Centres. Keep names and telephone numbers of traders in a safe place.
3. If you contact either Age Concern or Help the Aged they can suggest reliable traders in your area.
4. Find out whether your insurance or credit card company has a 24-hour emergency number where they will arrange repairs.
5. Check your insurance policy -does it cover the cost of repairs as well as any damage? Many insurance companies will not pay for repairs if the damage was caused by routine wear and tear particularly if you have neglected a long- term problem.
6. Consider taking out a maintenance plan which covers emergency repairs for your central heating.

Please turn over...

Trading Standards

County Hall
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 7QP

Tel: 08450 505 200

Trading Standards

16 Regent Street
Mansfield
Nottinghamshire
NG18 1SS

Tel: 08450 505 200

Trading Standards

2 Middle Gate
Newark
Nottinghamshire
NG24 1AG

Tel: 08450 505 200

Trading Standards

17B The Square
Retford
Nottinghamshire
DN22 6DB

Tel: 08450 505 200

Website: www.consumercomplaints.org.uk

Minicom: 0115 9772395

When an emergency happens

If you make sure that no further damage can happen, for example by turning off the water supply if you have a burst pipe, you should have a breathing space when you can contact a reliable trader.

Ask for a rough estimate when you first telephone -if you're not happy contact other traders for estimates.

If you're only given a rough guide to the cost, or you don't agree a price at all, a trader may only charge a reasonable fee. This will depend on the type of work, how long it took, and how well it was done. The trader could also include a reasonable amount to take account of any business he lost coming to you in an emergency.

It is a good idea to always ask for a written firm quotation before the work is started - then the tradesman cannot charge you more later. However, if you do have a dispute about the charges you could get quotes from other traders as to what they would have charged for the work.

Paying for the work

A trader will usually send an invoice after the work has been done so you have time to find the money to pay. Adequate insurance cover will pay for many repairs. If not, and you can't afford to pay cash, look around for the best credit deal. (See the leaflet 'Financing work on your home.')

All our information leaflets are available in a range of formats, including tape, large print or Braille. They can also be translated into any main language spoken in Nottinghamshire. If this would be useful to you please contact us on 0115 9773389.