

How to safely use sandbags and aqua sacs (for homes and businesses) video transcript

[At the top left of the image a Durham County Council logo followed by the text 'How to safely use sandbags and aqua sacs (for homes and businesses)' is displayed. Both are visible throughout the video.]

[Low background noise from on location video can sometimes be heard during the video, including river water and vehicle noises.]

[Text on screen reads, 'How to safely use sandbags and aqua sacs for homes and businesses' A side heading on the left reads, 'ResilientDurham communities'.]

[Video clip shows a closeup view of the River Wear and tree lined embankment, with a bridge over the river. The camera then pans out to show the same view in the distance, through the arch of a different stone-built bridge.]

[Voiceover: A man, not seen, narrates throughout the video.]

Welcome to this video guide to the use of sandbags and aqua sacs on behalf of the County Durham and Darlington Local Resilience Forum.

Floods can happen anywhere at anytime.

Sandbags and aqua sacs will not stop the water completely but may reduce the impact of flooding.

[Video clip of a river and tree lined embankment.]

It is important to consider if sandbags are your best option for protecting your home.

Remember, sandbags can be very heavy.

Other permanent measures like floodgates may be a better option.

[Image of a white door with a flood gate fitted.]

[Image showing plastic sheeting lining a floor and with the sheeting extending half a metre up the wall. A non-soaked aqua sac is lying flat on the floor against a black bucket with water in it.]

Another option are aqua sacs. They are light to lift and are put in place in the same way and at the same time as you would sandbags.

[Video clip showing a person taking an aqua sac out of the bucket of water and showing that the aqua sac has expanded to look like a filled sandbag. They place it near the wall on the plastic sheet covering the floor.]

Aqua sacs need to be soaked with water prior to flood to make them expand.

[Image of five filled sandbags, a light orange coloured bag half filled with sand. Each bag is tied with a black cable ties and black plastic string.]

Sandbags and other property flood protection measures should be deployed in advance of any anticipated flooding, [stresses the words] not at the last minute.

[Video clip of environment agency flood warning on mobile phone screen.]

Keep up to date with weather forecasts and flood warnings from the Environment Agency. Go online to register with the free flood warning service at the website shown below:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency

[Video clip of person wearing protective rubber gloves and work boots with a steel capped toe.]

Sandbags are heavy and can be made of rough material, so always wear gloves and sensible footwear when filling, laying and disposing of them.

[Image showing two sandbags.

The sandbag on the left of the screen is filled full and tied at the top. It has a large red cross beside it, to show that is the wrong way to fill the sandbag.

The sandbag on the right of the screen is filled half full and tied at the top. It has a large green tick beside it, to show that is the correct way to fill the sandbag.]

It is key to remember "do not overfill the bags."

Video clip close-up showing a sandbag being filled, the hands of one person getting a shovelful of sand and putting it into a sandbag being held open by a different person's hands.

One sandbag can weigh between 15 to 20 kilos, so they will be heavy to carry and the sand will be too compressed to be effective.

[Video clip of a person cutting the cable-tie from the sandbag prior to laying it.]

Tie the sandbag at the top of the bag for transporting, but make sure to untie the bag before laying.

[Video clip of three men laying a large amount of plastic sheeting on a floor in front and each side of a doorway. The sheeting continues up the wall but not the doorway.]

Prepare the area by laying down plastic sheeting and use duct tape to fasten it to the door. This will reduce seepage of water through the sandbags.

[Video clip showing the wall and door in the background with plastic sheeting covering the floor and going up the wall. Duct tape has been placed to hold it to the wall, along the edge of the plastic sheeting.

On top of the plastic sheeting a single row of sandbags are placed on the floor in front of the doorway to form a curved U-shape, touching the wall at the side of the doorposts, to keep water away from the doorway.]

Sandbags should be laid like brickwork, laying the first sandbag at one end of what will become a 'sandbag wall' and laying each sandbag in turn to the other end.

Place the next sandbag on top of the flap of the sandbag before, until the end of the row. In this way there will be no gaps between the bags.

Make sure to flatten the top of the sandbag row with your foot before adding the next row to help make the structure more stable.

[Video clips of a sandbag wall being built are shown in the following order;

The base of the first sandbag is laid against the wall near the doorway. The bag lies flat away from the wall on top of the plastic sheeting.

The second bag is laid in line, with the base of the bag overlapping and on top of the loose end of the first bag. The man then 'pats' it down and cuts the cable tie off it.

A man checks the alignment of the completed first row of bags which are in a curved U-shape and directs another man to adjust the bags to line them up.

A man uses his foot to flatten and level the top of the bags.]

Stagger the rows so that the sandbags on the layer above lie across the gap between the two bags on the layer below.

[Video clip pans along the wall to show that a double row of bags form the bottom layer and a single row of bags have been placed on top to form the second layer. The bags are placed along the centre between the two rows below following the line.

The second layer of sandbags have been placed in a line overlapping the gaps below, both the gap between the double row and the gap between the lined-up bags of the first layer. They overlap at a slight angle to form a smooth curve.]

A curved wall in an arch is stronger than a straight wall. While the wall should be at least two layers high, additional layers may be needed depending on the expected flood height.

If you want to lay additional sandbags later, the wall must have depth as well as height, to stop it falling over. As a rule, the base should be three times the width of the height of the wall.

[Video clip showing three sandbags, two are set close-up to each other and one placed centrally on top over the 'gap' to form the second layer.

A blue line is then drawn below the sandbags to show the width and at the side of the sandbags to show the height. The length of the width line is three times longer than the length of the height line.]

Finally, bring the flap of plastic sheeting up and over the sandbags, and secure.

[Video clip of the wall being wrapped in plastic sheeting. The finished sandbag wall in front of the doorway forms a curved U-shape, touching the wall at the side of the doorposts, to keep water away from the doorway. On the side of the sandbag wall away from the doorway the extra plastic sheeting is lifted, up the outside of the sandbag wall, over the top and down the inside of the wall to the floor. It is then taped with Duct tape to secure it in place.]

[Image showing boxes of aqua sacs and sandbags stacked on pallets.]

You can purchase hessian sandbags and sand from builders' merchants and home improvement shops.

[Video clip of a view through the arch of a stone-built bridge showing a view of the River Wear and tree lined embankment, with another bridge over the river in the distance.]

By helping yourself, you allow the emergency services and others to help those most vulnerable.

For further information visit our website www.durham.gov.uk/emergencies, like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ResilientDurham, email us at ccuenquiries@durham.gov.uk, or call us on 03000 264 654

[Video still: Text on screen reads;

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On the left side of the image a side heading reads, 'ResilientDurham communities']

[Video ends]