



R B F & R S

news release

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WEATHER CONDITIONS - UPDATE

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) had anticipated returning to 'business as usual' by the end of this week. However, with further snow across the county last night, the Brigade is continuing to implement its business continuity plans in order to minimise disruption to the Service.

The Operations Support Room will continue to run in order to monitor the Brigade's status in relation to crewing and weather conditions. RBFRS is still using its fleet of off-road capability vehicles to assist with incidents where necessary and is continuing to use the vehicles to help South Central Ambulance Service reach patients at life-critical incidents.

Many roads are still treacherous and RBFRS is reminding people to take extra care when driving. Drivers should remember to drive carefully and steadily, giving other drivers plenty of room, and allow extra space when manoeuvring their vehicle in slippery conditions. You should also ensure your windscreen, rear screen and mirrors are clear before setting off. Take an emergency kit of warm clothes, a shovel, food and drink, and a fully charged mobile phone to allow you to contact with your friends and relatives if you get stuck.

The recent cold weather may cause water pipes to burst. RBFRS does not attend domestic premises to deal with burst water pipes caused by weather conditions, unless there is hazard from flood water affecting the electricity supply or where vulnerable people are at risk. If you have a burst water pipe and are not at immediate risk, you can obtain further advice from Thames Water by visiting www.thameswater.co.uk.

With warmer weather predicted for the weekend, there is also a risk of flooding as a result of the snow melting. As with burst water pipes, RBFRS can only attend flooding incidents where there is a hazard from flood water affecting the electricity supply or where vulnerable people are at risk. If you are affected by flooding but are not at immediate risk, contact your Local Authority for advice.

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If flooding is affecting electrics, householders are advised to:

- Get out of the water –if possible, go upstairs
- If you can do so safely, turn off the electricity supply at the mains
- Do **NOT** attempt to turn off the electricity supply while standing in water
- If the electricity supply cannot be turned off safely, call 999

Andy Mancey, Area Manager for Response at RBFRS, said: “While we are still continuing to implement our business continuity plans, members of the public can assist us and the other emergency services by taking extra care on the roads and only calling 999 in a genuine emergency. People can also help us by taking steps to reduce the risk of a fire in the home - including never leaving cooking unattended, switching off electrical appliances before going out or to bed, and always using a fireguard with an open fire.

“With many schools still shut to day because of the weather, please remind your children about the dangers of playing on frozen water. Dog walkers who attempt to save pets which have fallen into icy water are also putting their own lives in danger. If someone falls through the ice, do not try to go to their rescue – call 999 instead.”

ENDS.