

Consultation launched on reservoir emergency on-site flood plans

News story

Government believes that on-site plans should be an essential part of maintaining public safety.



All large raised reservoirs in England could be legally required to have emergency contingency plans in place under measures being [consulted](#) on by the government from today (Tuesday 16 June).

Also known as on-site flood plans, these are needed to ensure that those responsible for the reservoir are ready to manage potential risks from an uncontrolled release of water from a reservoir that may cause flooding to the surrounding area and communities.

England already has some of the toughest safety reservoir regulations in the world with a strong safety track record. However, a survey of reservoir owners in the wake of the 2019 Toddbrook Reservoir incident revealed that while a large proportion of large raised reservoirs do already have on-site plans, those who do not cite the lack of legal requirement as their reason. The survey also identified different practices in how often flood plans are reviewed and updated.

While incidents like the spillway failure at Toddbrook Reservoir are rare, swift action when the incident occurred was aided by the fact that both an on-site flood plan and a local flood evacuation plan were available and quickly activated.

The government believes that on-site plans should be an essential part of maintaining public safety, and set out its intention to consult on making them a legal requirement in its [response](#) to Professor David Balmforth's independent review report on the Toddbrook Reservoir spillway failure.

The government recognises that there are different types of reservoir, and that emergency plans will be unique to each reservoir and how it is operated.

The eight week online consultation seeks views on:

- managing and maintaining a flood plan
- how frequently a flood plan should be tested
- updating guidance about preparing a flood plan
- training that may be needed to support emergency planning and incident response

The consultation will run until 10 August.

On 9 June 2020, the government also published the [Terms of Reference](#) for Part B of the independent Reservoir Review. Part B will examine how the current legislation is applied and ensure it is robust in order to continue to maintain our safety record. It is expected to report to Government by February 2021.

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