



STAY SAFE: A GUIDE FOR RIVER WATCHERS



Red Burn, Acomb
river watch

Your safety is the No.1 priority whilst monitoring the water (river and flood) environment



Who is this guide for and what does it cover?

Anyone taking part in community-based monitoring activities. It provides generic advice on how to stay safe when working in and around the water environment, (especially when there is a flood event).



****PLEASE READ BEFORE CARRYING OUT ANY MONITORING ACTIVITIES****



Be prepared: check local weather forecast before heading out <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/> and read the Environment Agency's 'How To Stay Safe' during a flood document <http://bit.do/staysafe>.



Stay safe: if possible, carry out monitoring activities in pairs. If you are alone, let a family member or friend know if (and where) you plan to be out in the catchment. Take a mobile with you and stick to footpaths or routes which you are familiar with.



Flood water is dangerous, deep and fast flowing - never walk or drive through it. The Environment Agency stress that it only takes six inches of fast flowing water to knock over an adult.



River banks can be steep and slippery. Take care if you are taking a water sample. If in doubt, find a safer location or monitor when conditions improve.



If you are under the age of 16, ensure you are accompanied by an adult.



Avoid any monitoring activities as soon as **daylight begins to fade.**



If you intend to make observations during and immediately after heavy rainfall, be aware that **river levels may rise rapidly.** Keep away from the river bank, move to high ground and take photos or videos from where you are. Be aware of the situation around you.



If you are taking water samples to monitor the quality of the water, ensure that you wash your hands as soon as you return home / before eating. Where possible, wear gloves and use a sampling pole. Store monitoring equipment away from children and animals.



Wear suitable footwear, warm clothing and a waterproof coat.



Do not share your home address on social media. 'Acomb' is sufficient.

Remember... you are responsible for your own health and safety. Think before you act.