

Batten down the hatches, there's more on the way

Written by jamie

Wednesday, 14 December 2011 11:13 - Last Updated Thursday, 15 December 2011 10:33



Huge Waves crash against Porthcawl lighthouse, WALES will be hit by further flooding later this week as rivers and waterways struggle to cope with days of prolonged downpours, forecasters have warned.

The Environment Agency warned that further heavy rainfall, due to hit Wales tomorrow and Friday, could cause severe problems in already saturated areas of the country.

More than 40mm of rain fell in some parts of the country over a 12-hour period yesterday, while the nation was buffeted by winds of up to 60mph.

The Environment Agency Wales said there were 21 flood alerts in place on rivers across the country with more expected to be announced.

Yesterday morning, the Severn burst its banks by the bridge on the B4398 next to Laundry Wood, near Llanymynech, flooding low lying farmland.

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There were also coastal flood alerts in place for the western coast of Anglesey and the Llyn Peninsula, as a result of the strong to gale force westerly winds.

An even stronger storm that was forecast for later this week is now expected to be weaker and hit France and Germany, but more heavy rainfall and strong winds are expected to reach Wales on Thursday and into Friday.

A spokesman for the Environment Agency said: "Officers will be watching the situation closely over the next few days and have been checking defences, monitoring systems via CCTV and removing any blockages that may increase the risk of flooding."

The spokesman said parts of South Wales are expected to be worst affected, but the combination of heavy rainfall and strong winds may cause disruption in other parts of the country.

He added: "Drainage blockages caused by falling leaves and the already saturated ground will contribute to the risk of surface water flooding, whilst the strong winds may lead to tidal surges and large waves hitting the Welsh coast.

"The heavier rain may also cause fast responding rivers to rise, leading to some flood alerts being issued in parts of the country.

"The Agency is advising people to remain alert and to take care as driving conditions may be hazardous.

"People are advised to keep an eye on weather reports, and information on the Met Office website.

"People should also listen out to local news and traffic reports for advice and for any disruption locally."

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Western Power – which provides electricity across South West Wales – confirmed hundreds of homes have been experiencing problems with supply due to the weather conditions.

“We are experiencing weather related issues across the region, but, as always, our priority is to get people back on supply as quickly as possible,” a spokeswoman said.

“But, safety is paramount and some of these issues do relate to trees bringing down power lines.”

Chris Burton, from MeteoGroup, said: “It’s not unusual to get a westerly flow from the Atlantic causing stormy weather over the UK during Autumn and early winter.

“For the last few years, it’s been different with colder weather, so it seems worse than usual, but it’s not.”

The M48 Severn Bridge was closed in both directions yesterday morning and later reopened.

Motorists were warned of hail and slush on the M4 in south-east Wales between junction 34 and junction 32 .

There were also warnings of surface water – and hail and rain showers – on the M4 in Carmarthenshire.

The A55 Britannia Bridge between Anglesey and Gwynedd was closed to high-sided vehicles due to strong winds.

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And between 5cm to 10cm of snow was set to fall on ground above 100m with higher communities like Blackwood and Brecon already affected.

Jonathan Powell, senior weather forecaster at Positive Weather Solutions, said: "Wind speeds will peak on Wednesday afternoon with gusts still registering gale force, creating temporary 'blizzard like' conditions."

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