

Heavy rain may cause more flooding

Written by Elaine

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More localised flooding could hit parts of southern and eastern England and Wales as another band of heavy rain sweeps in, the Environment Agency has warned.

The agency said the wettest April on record, which caused flooding in some areas last week, had left rivers high and soils saturated, and rain expected to spread across England and Wales in the next 24 hours could lead to localised flooding.

Forecasters say spells of persistent and heavy rain are expected, accompanied by winds of up to 50mph in some areas.

South Wales and much of southern England face up to 20mm-30mm (0.8-1.2 inches) of rain through the night, while north-east England, Northern Ireland and southern Scotland could see similar amounts of rain in some places on Thursday, the Met Office said.

Although there is currently just one flood warning in place, the Environment Agency said there is a risk of localised flooding across the south and south-west of England, south Wales, the Midlands and parts of East Anglia.

The current flood warning is for the lower River Tone in Somerset, while six less serious alerts are also in place in East Anglia, the South East and South West.

Environment Agency flood manager Katharine Evans said: "Following an exceptionally wet April which led to some flooding last week, rivers are high and the ground is saturated, meaning that further rainfall brings with it an increased risk of flooding.

"We are continuing to closely monitor the forecast and rainfall, particularly for rivers in South

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Wales, Devon and Cornwall. And Environment Agency teams are out on the ground keeping a close watch on river levels, as well as checking defences and clearing any potential blockages to reduce the risk of flooding.

"If flooding does happen, we would urge people to keep away from swollen rivers and not to attempt to walk or drive through floodwater."

Flooding which followed storms and heavy rain last week left one man dead after the car he was travelling in became submerged at a flooded road ford. Despite numerous flood warnings only a small number of properties were flooded across the country.