

An overflowing sewer can be unpleasant. Anyone who has had that experience usually remembers it.

But sewage overflows affect everyone, even people who have never been near one. They cost money to clean up and they damage our waterways and oceans.

That's why Council is so committed to solving the problem. And that's why it's important for you to help by keeping stormwater out of the sewerage system on your property. You can be sure you're helping the environment and your community at the same time.

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HOW TO CUT SEWER OVERFLOW

WHY DO SEWERS OVERFLOW?

Under the streets of Dubbo there are two systems which carry our unwanted water.

You may already know about the sewerage system. It collects, treats and disposes of sewage from homes and industry.

Not as many people know about the stormwater system. This is the one which handles the rainwater which runs off our streets and roofs.

These two systems are supposed to be separate. So, when stormwater gets into the sewerage system, there's a problem. That extra water can overload the sewerage pipes, leading to an overflow of diluted raw sewage.





Overflows pollute waterways and sometimes back up into streets and homes. They are a serious source of pollution, a potential health risk and a nuisance to both the community and Council.

That's the bad news. The good news is that we can reduce the problem by stopping stormwater from leaking into the sewerage system.

Council has already started to do that. It will need your help.

HOW DOES STORMWATER GET IN?

There are two ways for stormwater to get into the sewerage system.

If sewer pipes are cracked or broken, rainwater which soaks into the ground will slowly seep into the pipe. These

small cracks can be caused by tree roots or movement in the pipes as the ground settles over many years. Because the cracks are below the ground, they're very hard to detect. The technical term for this source of stormwater is 'infiltration'.

The other way for stormwater to enter the sewerage system is through a direct flow. It can be an illegal connection, for example when a roof downpipe leads into the sewerage system. Or it can be faulty plumbing. Technically, this sort of problem is called 'inflow'.

WHAT IS COUNCIL DOING ABOUT THE PROBLEM?

As a property owner, you are responsible for maintaining pipes on your property so that stormwater doesn't leak into the

sewerage system. But problems can be hard for you to see, so Council is sending in inspection teams to help identify them.

You may have already heard of smoke-testing. This is where the inspection team blows

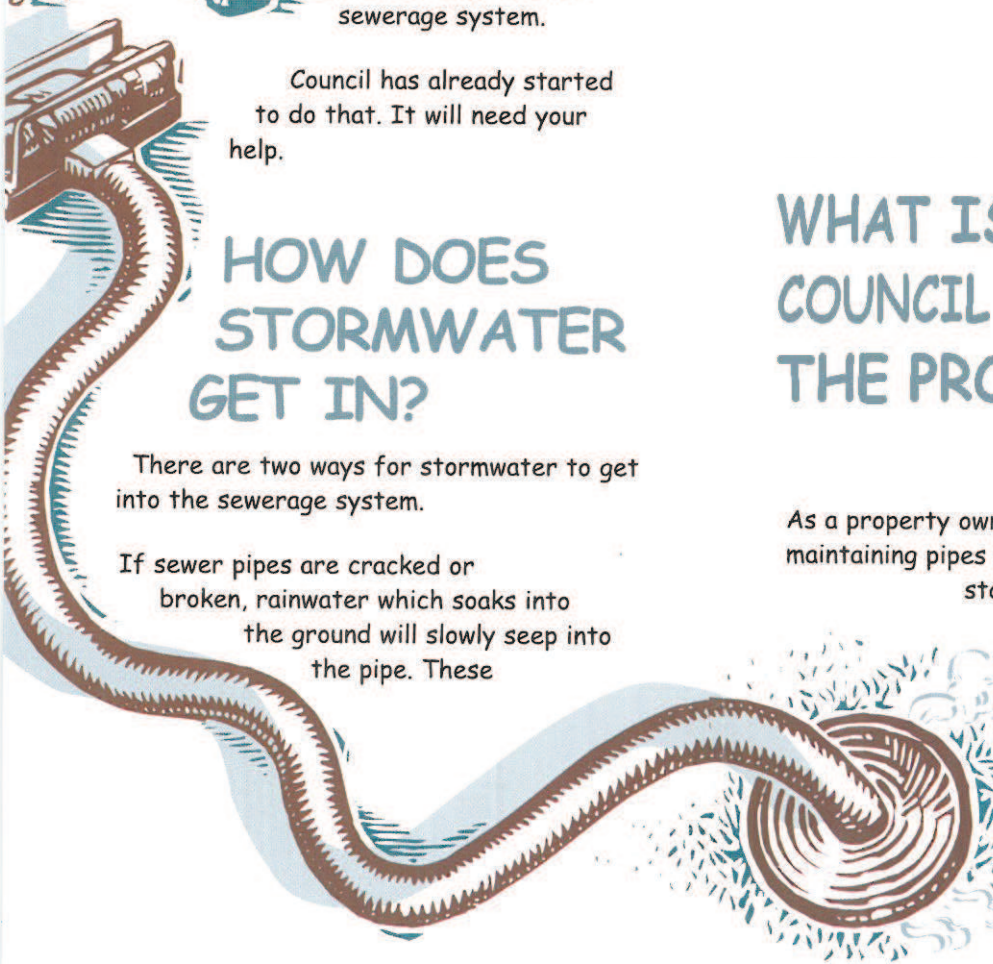
non-toxic smoke into sewer pipes. If there is an illegal connection, that smoke pours out of the stormwater inlet.

Council is also testing its own system and fixing any problems which show up. This includes placing gauges on the sewers to detect points where large amounts of water get in.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

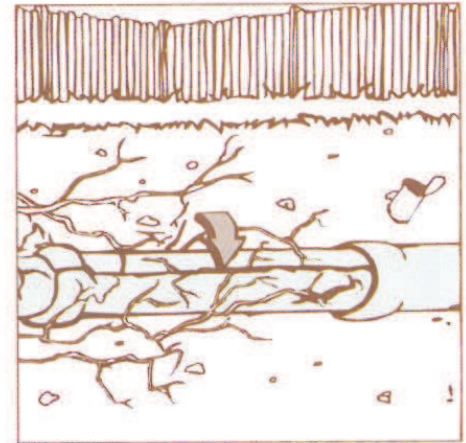
When the Council inspection teams point out a problem, promptly follow their directions on how to solve it.

Here is a list of the most common problems. If you are in any doubt about your sewerage system pipework, contact a qualified plumber.



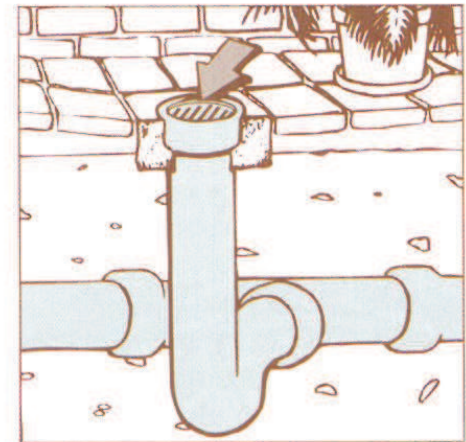
1 CRACKED PIPES

Tree roots can invade even the smallest cracks in pipes. As the roots grow, so does the size of the cracks. This lets in rainwater. Tree roots can also block the pipes. Cracked pipes have to be repaired or replaced.



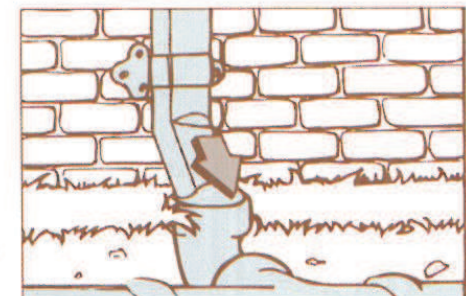
2 LOW-LYING GULLIES

A 'gully' is an open pipe which is covered with a grille and found just outside your building. It is there to release any backflow from blocked sewer pipes and make sure raw sewage doesn't overflow inside the house. If the ground around the gully is built up too high, it can let stormwater into the sewerage system. What you need to do is get a plumber to lift the gully or lower the ground around it.



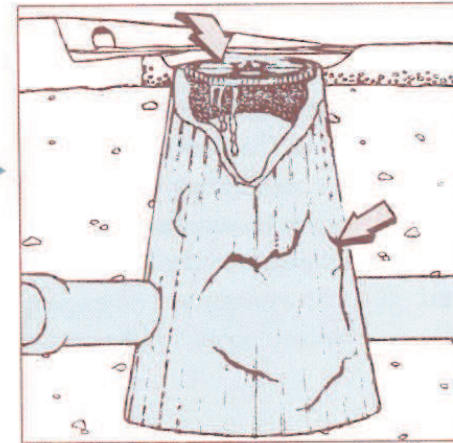
3 DIRECT CONNECTION

Stormwater downpipes are not allowed to be connected to the sewerage system. All water from your roof should be connected to the Council's stormwater system, if available.



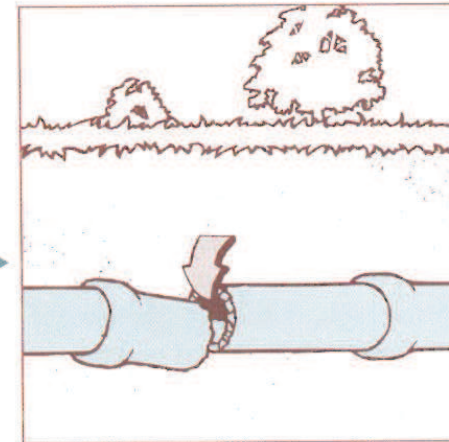
4 INSPECTION HOLES

Poorly fitting, cracked or broken inspection holes can let water into the sewerage system. If you notice any problems with them, please call Council's Water & Sewerage Division.



5 BROKEN PIPES

Broken pipes can occur in both Council's and householders' systems. Council inspects, maintains and repairs its system, and property owners are responsible for sewer pipes and downpipes on their land. Broken sewer pipes not only let stormwater in, they can also allow untreated waste to enter the soil and create unhealthy conditions. If you suspect broken pipes, have your system inspected by a licensed plumber.



6 BOUNDARY TRAPS

The boundary trap is an inspection point in the sewerage system. If the boundary trap is set below ground level and its lid or concrete rim is damaged, stormwater can get in. There can also be a problem if the vertical riser (the pipe under the boundary

