

Introduction

As a property owner, it is your responsibility to maintain or repair sewer pipes within your property, up to the connection to Council's sewer. By maintaining your own property's sewer pipes and ensuring that the installation, and any modifications to your pipes, are carried out in accordance with Plumbing Code of Australia, you will assist in minimising sewer blockages and repair work.

Under many of the streets in the Dubbo Regional Council area there are two completely separate systems. One is the stormwater system which captures the rainwater from streets and roofs. The other is the sewerage system which collects waste water. Waste water from toilets, sinks, showers and washing machines is carried through the sewer mains and treated at Council's Sewage Treatment Plants.

Council Responsibility

Dubbo Regional Council maintains and repairs the treatment plants, pipes and pumping stations that supply water to and take sewage from households in the urban areas of Dubbo and Wellington.

Dubbo Regional Council is responsible for the sewerage pipes up to the first pipe joint within your property. Council often relies on advice from residents regarding problems with sewer services.

If you notice a sewage overflow, please phone Council's Customer Service Centre on (02) 6801 4000 or email council@dubbo.nsw.gov.au

Contact us

For more information about your sewerage services contact Council's Customer Service Centre:

Ph: (02) 6801 4000

W: dubbo.nsw.gov.au

E: council@dubbo.nsw.gov.au

SEWERAGE SERVICES

A guide to your responsibilities and ours

Information for property owners about sewerage services.





Yard gully



Boundary shaft



Boundary shaft

Why do sewers overflow?

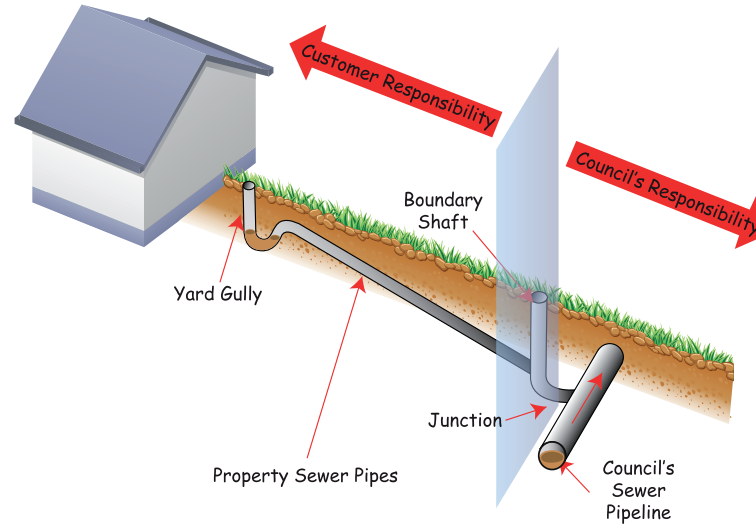
The stormwater system and the sewerage system are designed to be separate. When stormwater gets into the sewerage system the extra water can overload the system leading to an overflow of diluted raw sewage that can pollute water ways and sometimes back up into streets and homes. Overflows can be prevented by reducing the risk of stormwater entering the sewerage system. The most common causes of this are cracked or broken pipes, and illegal connections between the stormwater system and the sewerage system. Blockages are the other main cause of sewer overflows.

What are the signs of sewer blockage and cracked pipes?

- Toilets, basins, baths or tubs are slow to empty
- Toilets overflow or fill higher than usual
- Gully-traps in the yard overflow when the toilet is flushed or when basins or baths are released.
- Sewer manholes overflow
- Gurgling noises occur in property sewer pipes

What are the causes of sewer blockages?

- Rubbish, children's toys, tennis balls, nappies, sanitary pads, cooking waste, sand and other wastes not suitable for flushing into the sewer system, or putting down the drain.
- Tree roots infiltrating the property pipes
- Pipes that have been crushed or flattened
- Pipes that have been laid poorly
- Illegal connection of stormwater pipes (for example roofing downpipes) causing the sewerage system to overflow when it rains



What should I do to help prevent sewer overflows?

- Only flush toilet paper down the toilet. Put other items in the garbage.
- Don't put food scraps, oil or cooking fats down the sink. These can solidify when they cool and cause blockages. Instead wipe pans with a paper towel and throw it in a bin.
- Don't bury sewer access pits (manholes) under gardens, driveways or lawns.
- Don't plant trees over the sewer pipes as the roots get in and cause blockages.

Important features

There are two important features on your property that you need to maintain properly to avoid sewer overflows:

Boundary shaft

This is an access point to your property's drainage system that allows you to inspect for and clear blockages. If you suspect a blockage, first locate your boundary shaft (it looks like a plastic or metal cap with a concrete or earthenware surround) before contacting a licensed plumber. You or a licensed plumber should contact Dubbo Regional Council if the blockage is suspected to be on Council's side of the boundary shaft. If your boundary shaft is not full of water, the blockage may be on your side of the boundary shaft.

Yard Gully

A yard gully generally has a loose-grated metal or plastic removable lid to allow sewage to overflow if a blockage has occurred. This should prevent sewage from overflowing inside your house.

The National Plumbing Code states the gully opening should be at least 150mm below the lowest point of your internal household drainage plumbing fixtures.

Keep your gully clear of all objects and debris both on top and around so that it is easy to locate and remove the cap. You should not glue or fix the removable lid on the concrete surround.

The gully should be 75mm above ground level except if located on a pathway. If on a pathway, the surrounding surface level should fall away from the gully to prevent ingress of stormwater.