

Stormwater – Fencing

1. Overview

1.1. Objective

The purpose of the Fencing Policy is to ensure the right information and consistent guidelines are used in fencing Sydney Water's Stormwater Network to reduce the possible safety risk to the public, and in replacing/repairing existing fencing associated with the network.

1.2. Scope

The Fencing Policy covers safety fencing, common boundary fencing, road and bridge fencing associated with Sydney Water owned stormwater channels. The fences included may be located along open stormwater channels, around Stormwater Quality Improvement Devices (SQIDs) and drainage pumping stations (DPS), around Trunk Drainage Land, around headwalls under roadways and on bridges. The policy applies to the Stormwater Group and Group Property and includes restrictions associated with the policy.

1.3. Summary

The Fencing Policy provides minimum standards to be used when Sydney Water or others are installing or replacing fences around the Stormwater Network.

The policy includes guidelines as to

- The type of fence to be used
- Installation
- Access Gates
- Locks
- Fences damaged by trees
- Scouring along fence lines, and
- Insurance claims relating to these matters.

2. Policy

Sydney Water provides fencing and/or contributes to the cost of fencing of stormwater structures under its control to reduce the possible safety risk to the public. Such fences generally fall within the following seven categories:

- **Common boundary fences:** Sydney Water may contribute to the half cost of an appropriate standard fence that is typical in the area, where the fence is along the boundary between the private property and a stormwater asset (open channel), or Sydney Water land. Sydney Water's commitment will generally be in accordance with the Dividing Fences Act, noting that Sydney Water is not legally bound by the provisions of this Act.
- **Safety fences in private property:** Sydney Water will contribute to half the costs of providing safety fencing within private property where the channel poses a safety risk to the occupants of the property. (See Section 5 for responsibilities)
- **Safety fences around Sydney Water channels and SQIDs:** Sydney Water will provide safety fencing along its open concrete stormwater channels and across headwalls where these structures adjoin public land, or publicly accessible land or public roads. Where the channel is covered, and does not represent a safety risk to the public, Sydney water will not provide fencing. Sydney Water may also provide safety fencing around SQIDS and other stormwater structures where there are considered to pose a safety risk. Where Sydney Water has previously installed safety fencing or such fencing has been transferred to Sydney Water, Sydney Water will generally maintain the same standard of fencing.

Sydney Water does not generally fence waterways in Rouse Hill Development Area nor in other areas where the banks are generally not steep, access and egress is not difficult and fences are an impediment on the flow of stormwater in high rainfall events.

- **Security fencing:** Sydney Water may install security fencing around some of its stormwater assets such as drainage pumping stations and open SQIDs where required to more effectively manage safety and security issues.
- **Security or safety fencing around Sydney Water land containing a covered stormwater channel.** Generally such land is not fenced unless there is an unacceptable safety risk or the land is being used for unlawful purposes. Eg illegal dumping of rubbish.
- **Safety fencing on pedestrian and road bridges.** Sydney Water will maintain such fences where Sydney Water owns the bridge or the headwall.
- **Road Barriers.** Generally road barriers are the responsibility of Local Councils. However, in areas of high risk from vehicle damage to Sydney Water's stormwater assets, Sydney Water will install road barriers to protect its assets. The Stormwater Group, Asset Management Division, is responsible for determining where road barriers are required to protect its assets.

2.1. Restrictions

The following restrictions apply in the application of this policy:

- Retaining walls: Sydney Water will not contribute to the building or replacement of retaining walls where:
 - The ground level has been changed since the construction of the stormwater channel, and/or
 - The property owner wants to change the level of their land.
- All new retaining walls next to a channel need to be approved by Sydney Water in accordance with Sydney Water's Building Over Stormwater Channel requirements.
- Common boundary fencing:
 - Core drilling of fence posts into channel coping is not allowed.
 - No private gates are allowed to open onto a Sydney Water channel or land
 - Sydney Water will not replace a fence damaged by a tree if that tree was on private property or public land.
- Raising the walls of a Sydney Water stormwater channel: generally Sydney Water does not allow the raising of the walls of its stormwater channels. Any alteration to a Sydney Water structure requires approval.
- Sydney Water is not responsible for fences on bridges that are not owned by Sydney Water. All bridges over a stormwater channel require Sydney Water's approval.
- Damage to private fences due to floods – owners are required to seek compensation from their own insurance companies. They may apply to Sydney Water's Risk and Insurance Group if not compensated by private insurer.
- Fences damaged by scouring: Sydney Water will not repair fences damaged by scouring in private or public property if the scouring has been caused by overland flow into the channel.
- Safety fencing in public areas: Fencing may not be required when there is a landscaped area along the edge of an open stormwater channel or when the banks are not steep. Sydney Water will assess the level of risk posed to the public in these areas when determining the need for fencing.

2.2. Guidelines

- **Type of Fence:**
 - **New and replacement fencing in public areas around open stormwater channels and SQIDs**
 - Stormwater channel fencing (Inclusive of all components such as gates etc) should be a pool type fence, which complies in every respect with Australian Standards (AS 1926 – Fences and Gates for Private Swimming Pools). The minimum height to be 1.2m to a maximum of 1.8m (based on safety hazards with a specific site).
 - The fences shall consist of a top and bottom square section and in between should consist of a tubular rail with solid, round or square section infill bars of suitable strength.

- All fencing components and fixing shall be of suitable corrosion resistant materials e.g. hot dipped galvanised.
- In some sensitive community areas, i.e. landscaped parks etc, an electrostatically applied polyester powder coated paint finish (in accordance with AS 1163 – Structural Steel Hollow Sections) on the safety fencing may be used, in consultation with local government, etc.
- Where an existing safety fence needs repair and does not meet the Australian Standard (AS 1926) it should only be repaired if the damage is minimal e.g. hole in fence. If the fence is damaged over a longer length, consideration should be given to replace the fence with a safety pool type fence. Consideration should include type of surrounding fences, costs, safety, etc.
- **Fencing around Drainage Pumping Stations, Sydenham Pit & some SQIDs¹.**
 - Minimum 1.8m high security type fence.
- **Common Boundary Fencing (adjoining Sydney Water land or open stormwater channels)**
 - If approached by a property owner adjoining Sydney Water land containing a stormwater asset, Sydney Water will install fencing if there is a safety concern. Standard common boundary contributions would apply.
 - Sydney Water does not specify the type of common boundary fencing and will only contribute towards half the costs of a standard type fence. That is, a hardwood paling or colour bond fence between a minimum of 1.2m and a maximum of 1.8m high
 - Sydney Water consent is required before it will contribute towards the replacement or repair of common boundary fencing or modification to the existing location of the fence (see standard letter attached)
- **Fences on pedestrian and road bridges or adjacent to a roadway**
 - Safety fencing for pedestrian and road bridges should be a type fence, which complies in every respect with Australian Standards (AS 5100.1-2004 – Bridge Design Part 1: Scope and general principles). The minimum height is to be 1.2m.
- **Vehicle Collision Barriers on roads – used to prevent risk of vehicle collision with stormwater asset**
 - Barriers shall comply in every respect with Australian Standards (AS 5100.1-2004 – Bridge Design Part 1: Scope and general principles). The minimum height as per standard.
- **Installation**
 - To be carried out in accordance with all relevant codes and regulations including but not limited to AS 1926 - Fences and Gates for Private Swimming Pools, AS 5100.1-2004 – Bridge Design, etc – See references.

¹ SQIDs which are open and/or have been assessed as being a high safety risk to the public

- **Access Gates**
 - New or replacement gates in public areas or on Sydney Water land shall comply with the AS 1926 – Fences and Gates for Private Swimming Pools and be of a suitable corrosion resistant material
 - New gates are to be placed only at locations that are above step irons in open channels
 - Gates are not permitted on common boundary fencing where the boundary is adjacent an open stormwater channel. Any gate installed without Sydney Water’s knowledge or consent is at the adjoining owners own risk, and Sydney Water may request removal or secure the opening to prevent unapproved entry onto Sydney Water land.
 - Where a stormwater channel traverses private property and access is required over channel, Sydney Water may permit a gate to access an approved bridge over an open stormwater channel.
- **Locks**
 - All Sydney Water gates around open stormwater channels are to be secured with a Standard Jackson Lock or approved master key padlock, and chain where necessary.
- **Trees**
 - Sydney Water is responsible for managing trees on its land and will replace fences if damaged by those trees. If a tree on private property damages a common boundary fence the owner is responsible for repairing the fence
- **Scouring**
 - Sydney Water will repair Sydney Water owned safety fencing if scouring destabilises the fence. The stormwater group is to organise restoration of the land and stabilisation before fencing is repaired.
- **Insurance**
 - Property owners are requested to contact their own insurer and advise Sydney Water regarding any damage to common boundary fencing caused by flooding, falling trees, etc.

3. Context

3.1. Definitions

Term	Definition
Channel	Stormwater channel owned by Sydney Water
Open Stormwater Channel	Stormwater with no covering
Covered Stormwater Channel	Enclosed channel – not open
SQID	Stormwater Quality Improvement Device
DPS	Drainage Pumping Station
Sydney Water Bridge	A bridge owned by Sydney Water. Can be a road bridge or foot bridge
Common Boundary Fence	Fence between private property and Sydney Water land or along the edge of an easement in Sydney's Water favour. The fence can also be between private property and drainage reserves or Council easements where there is a Sydney Water asset
Safety Fence and Gates	Standard Sydney Water fence compliant with the relevant Australian Standard (see page 7)
Trunk Drainage Land	Land set aside for drainage purposes
Easement	An easement is a right held by one party to make use of the land of another for certain specific purpose. For Sydney Water this is to protect a Sydney Water asset, ensure access to that asset for operation and maintenance purposes, alert owners there is an asset on their property and to limit future use of the land to satisfy the above requirements
Security Fencing	Generally a 1.8m chain wire fence with barbed wire, or another fencing designed specifically for increased site security. Determined to be required through a site safety and security Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIDRA)
Asset Management Group Property	Manages common boundary fencing issues and requests, safety and security fencing repairs and alterations for fences along and around Sydney Water's stormwater assets
Asset Management Stormwater	Manage the safety and security fencing along and around Sydney Water's stormwater assets