



Wastewater system and private plumbing inspections

Improving our wastewater system to protect the environment and the health of our communities.

We're working on an important program called Wastewater Fix, to investigate and reduce the amount of stormwater entering our wastewater system.

This involves inspecting the condition of our wastewater system, as well as stormwater and wastewater pipes and connections on private properties.

Why are we inspecting stormwater and wastewater systems on private properties?

Wastewater and stormwater are managed using two separate systems.

Wastewater is the water that Sydney Water collects from your kitchen, laundry, bathroom and toilet. Stormwater is rainwater that runs from your roof and over land into stormwater drains, which flows into local waterways.

When it rains, stormwater can get into our wastewater pipes and the system can overload. This can cause wastewater to overflow into local waterways as well as on private properties, including inside homes.

The results from our inspections will help us understand more about why there are higher flows in our wastewater system after it rains - so we can plan repairs, improve how our system operates and reduce wastewater overflows during wet weather.

How can stormwater enter our wastewater system?

The most common ways for stormwater to get into our wastewater system is through:

- damaged wastewater maintenance holes
- stormwater downpipes incorrectly connected to private wastewater pipes or drains
- cracked, damaged or poorly sealed private wastewater pipes and fittings that can allow groundwater to enter
- damaged or low-lying overflow relief gullies, which should operate like a safety valve and prevent stormwater from entering private wastewater pipes.

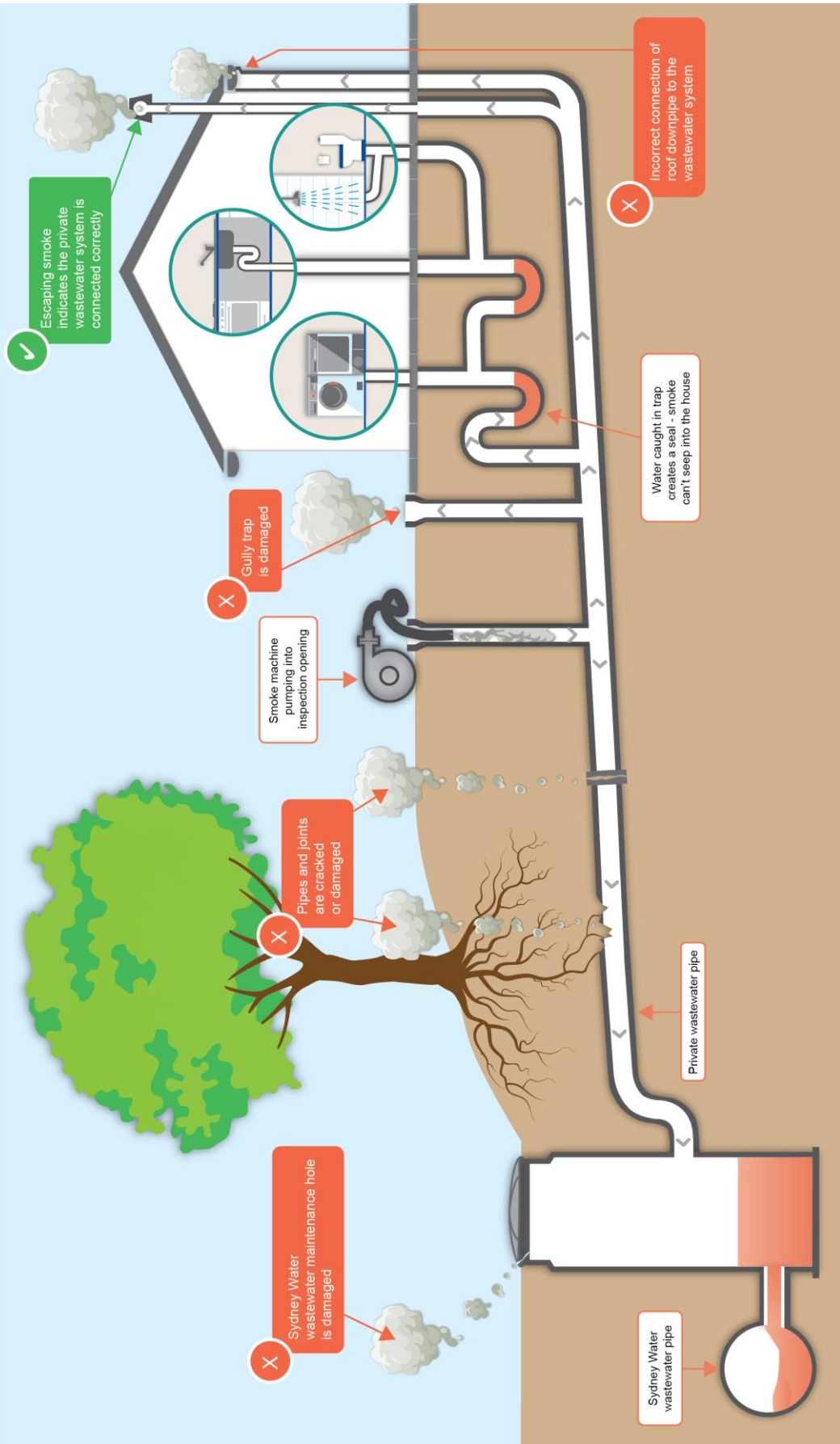


Our friendly team will knock on your door when they arrive to do the inspection.

Wastewater systems

Smoke testing and how it works

Sydney
WATER



Sydney Water owns and is responsible for maintaining the wastewater system in the street.

Your local council manages the stormwater system in your area.

As a property owner, you have a role in maintaining the wastewater and stormwater pipes and connections on your property.

How will we check your private plumbing?



Our inspections include visual checks and smoke testing of your private wastewater and stormwater pipes and connections, to make sure they are functioning correctly and connected properly.

Visual inspections

We'll take photos and videos as required to document our inspections.

We will look at:

- wastewater maintenance holes
 - to make sure they are sealed and not damaged
- stormwater downpipes
 - to check they are not connected to a wastewater overflow relief gully or wastewater pipes
- drainage channels and stormwater drains
 - to make sure they are not collecting ground and surface water that lead to an overflow relief gully
- overflow relief gullies (gully traps)
 - to check whether they are damaged or too close to the ground, so surface and stormwater can enter the wastewater system.

Smoke testing

A small amount of smoke will be pumped into your private wastewater system from the inspection opening, or our maintenance hole on your property.

The smoke is more like a mist – it is environmentally safe and will disappear after a few minutes without any odour.

The noise from the generator that provides power to the smoke machine sounds similar to a lawn mower, and will run for short periods during the testing.

Smoke testing is an effective and helpful way to:

- show us if our wastewater maintenance hole is damaged
- check for leaks in pipes and fixtures
- locate where cracked, broken or unsealed pipes or joints are underground
- find out if stormwater downpipes are incorrectly connected to the wastewater system.

If smoke escapes from the wastewater system, it will be visible above the ground.

This will show us where there may be damage or incorrect connections, so we can investigate and plan repairs or improvements.

How should I prepare for the inspection?



We will update you about one week before we expect to start our inspections. Smoke testing may need to be postponed if it's raining, cloudy or the ground is too wet.

You do not need to be at home during the inspection, but we will need your help each day during the week that our work is planned on your property. Please:

- make sure that all pets are safely secured, gates are unlocked and we can safely access the front and back yards of your property.
- put some water in all your sinks, and make sure any floor drains in the kitchen, bathroom and laundry are covered.

What if I see smoke during the inspection?

It's normal to see smoke coming out of your private wastewater vent pipes, which are usually located on the roof or side of the house. This shows that the vent pipes are in good working order and your wastewater system is connected correctly.

You may see smoke coming from the outside drains or gutters on your property, and sometimes it might enter your home through the laundry, kitchen, or bathroom drains. This is why we ask you to put some water in your sinks and cover your floor drains during the inspection.

The smoke does not indicate a fire, but **please let our team know if you see smoke in your home during our inspections**. The smoke will clear in a few minutes with normal ventilation.

We have notified NSW Fire and Rescue and NSW Police about our smoke testing work in your area. We will have signs in place to let the community know about our inspections.



Smoke coming out of a wastewater vent pipe shows that your wastewater system is connected correctly.

Will my services be impacted?

No – there will be no impact to your water or wastewater services during our inspections. You can continue to use your sinks, taps, toilets, showers and other fixtures as normal.

Will you provide me with the inspection results?

We will leave a card in your letterbox to let you know when we have completed our inspection.

Once our inspections are complete, we will advise property owners about any improvements we identified at the property. This includes providing details of the required repairs, what steps can be taken or how Sydney Water can help.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like to know more, please contact us:

- **Call:** 1800 659 825
- **Email:** wastewaterfix@sydneywater.com.au
- **Visit:** sydneywatertalk.com.au/wastewaterfix

Interpreter Service 13 14 50

Arabic • Chinese • Greek • Italian • Korean • Vietnamese • Hindi • Punjabi

إذا كنت تحتاج إلى مترجم، يرجى الاتصال بالرقم أعلاه.

如果您需要傳譯員的協助，請致電以上的號碼。

Αν χρειάζεστε διερμηνέα, τηλεφωνήστε στον παραπάνω αριθμό.

Se vi serve un interprete, telefonate al numero indicato sopra.

통역사가 필요하시면 위의 번호로 전화하십시오.

Nếu quý vị cần thông dịch viên, hãy gọi đến số trên đây.

यदि आपको बुझाविए की सहायता की जरूरत है, तो कृपया ऊपर दिए गए नम्बर पर फोन करें।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਸੇਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਮਦਦ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।