

Why Sewerage Inflow is a 'No-No'.

If the rain that falls on your property is going into the sewer, it's a waste of precious, pure, clean water! It also places a costly and unnecessary burden on Council's infrastructure. Sometimes, in heavy rain events and storms, our pumps can't cope with the volumes, leading to sewerage overflows.

Although it is illegal to connect the property stormwater to the sewer system, for a number of reasons, it can happen, often accidentally.

We want to work with you to help you make sure your connection is legal and safe for the environment.

Richmond
Valley
Council



STEP ONE: Check your overflow relief gully

An overflow relief gully (ORG) is designed to release wastewater outside your home if a pipe becomes blocked or the wastewater network is overloaded. If this occurs, the ORG grate should pop off and wastewater is then directed away from your home.



LOCATE ✓

Look for your ORG outside – it may be near the kitchen, laundry, bathrooms or the garage. Homes with several bathrooms may have more than one ORG.

CHECK ✓

Plumbing regulations require ORGs to be installed at least 150mm below the lowest internal drain fixture (usually a floor waste or shower drain) to prevent internal wastewater surcharges, and 75mm above the surrounding finished ground level. The exception to this is where the gully riser is positioned in a path or paved area, in this case the ORG must be finished at a level that will prevent rainwater from entering the wastewater network in wet weather.

FIX ✓

If your ORG is incorrectly installed, contact a licensed plumber to raise the ORG to the correct height. If the ORG cannot be raised because of the height of the internal floor waste of the home, other options including landscaping or drainage will need to be considered. Next time it's raining, inspect the area around the ORG to ensure that stormwater can flow away. If the water pools around the ORG, adjust the landscaping or remove the obstacle.

STEP TWO: Check your property's inspection shaft

An inspection shaft is designed to help you determine if a wastewater blockage has occurred within or outside your property (i.e. if the shaft is clear, it is likely that a blockage is within your household drainage system). You are responsible for ensuring that the inspection shaft on your property is visible and in working order.



LOCATE



Inspection shafts are located outside your home, usually near your property boundary and adjacent to a connection with council's sewer main. Inspection shafts are usually identified by a flat plastic or cast-iron round lid (about 18cm in diameter) within a concrete surround.

CHECK



You are responsible for ensuring that the inspection shaft on your property is visible and is not damaged. The lid should be in working order.

FIX



A plumber can supply replacement lids in different sizes. If other parts of the fitting (or bolted trap screw) are damaged, they may need to be replaced.

STEP THREE: Check your roofs gutter and downpipe

Downpipes should direct rain water from the roof of your house to the stormwater pipes for discharge to street gutters and drains. It is illegal for your home's roof water downpipes, or other drainage pipes, to discharge directly into the wastewater network (into your ORG).



LOCATE



The downpipe that runs vertically from your guttering (around the edge of your roofline).

CHECK



Discharge water into your downpipe and look for the point where the water flows out. If no point of discharge can be found there might be an illegal connection.

FIX



Contact a licensed plumber to redirect your downpipes, or other drainage pipes, to a legal point of discharge such as a roadside kerb, approved installed roof water discharge point or on-site rubble pit.