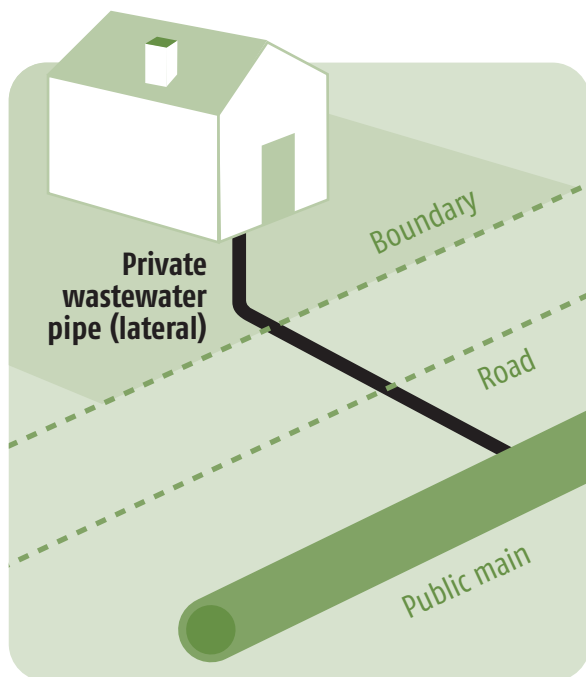


Historic policy on repairs for wastewater pipes

The pipe from the building to the connection with the public main (the private lateral) has always been owned by the property owner. In 1992 the Council decided to fund the structural repairs on private laterals in an attempt to improve the quality of natural stream and marine waters.

However, by 2004 it was obvious that the cost of this funding, which had increased to over \$600,000 annually, was not in proportion to any benefits. As a consequence in 2005 the Council decided to cease funding the work as part of the Draft Annual Plan. The change in Council's wastewater lateral policy came into place in January 2006 making repairs and maintenance of wastewater pipes the owner's responsibility once again.

For more information contact us on 499 4444.



The repair of your wastewater pipe

Your responsibility

As the property owner you are responsible for maintaining and repairing your private wastewater pipe, known as a lateral, from the building on your property down to the public main. This is because the pipe, down to the Council's main connection, is owned by you. This includes responsibility for the cost of repairs for the entire lateral including the section that is in the legal road. It also includes the costs associated with blockages caused by tree roots.

Lifespan of the pipes

Wastewater pipes have a life of about 80 years. If the pipe is properly constructed and maintained, it is designed to withstand normal tree root and traffic loadings. However as pipes reach the end of their life, the age of the pipe is more likely to be the cause of any damage.

How to know when pipes need repairing

If the pipe is regularly getting blocked or there are signs of seepage (wet patches appearing during dry weather), then your pipe needs repairing.

How to find out the cause

You will need to employ a plumber to establish the cause of the blockage or seepage. Alternatively you can contact us on 499 4444 and request that our maintenance contractors inspect the public mains. If the public mains are clear, then our contractors will advise you to employ a plumber to investigate your private drain pipe.

How to get the repair work done

If it is determined that the fault is in your side of the connection then you will need to engage a plumber to fix the fault and you are responsible for all the costs.

If the fault is found to be in the public main, you need to ring us on 499 4444 and log a fault. We will verify where the fault is and get our maintenance contractor to fix the problem at our cost.

The Council's responsibility

If the damage to the drain is found to be a tree on Council road reserve we will clear the blockage the first time but subsequent faults are your responsibility.

If you do not carry out the repair or work to the required specification and the blockage recurs, any future costs for tree removal are your responsibility.

The Council has no legal obligation to meet the costs of repair unless the Council caused the damage.

The Council is, however, responsible for any maintenance and repairs to the public main.

The utility company's responsibility

If the damage to your private pipe has been caused by a utility company (e.g. gas, electricity, telephone company etc), then they are responsible for repairing the damage.