

## Check your overflow relief gully

A common point where stormwater can enter the sewerage system is the overflow relief gully (ORG). Located outside your home, the ORG is a fitting that releases sewage in the event of a sewer blockage. When this occurs, the ORG cover should pop off to release excess pressure and direct sewage away from your home.

You can check your property to make sure the ORG is correctly installed by:

- ensuring the area surrounding your ORG is sloped away from the house. This directs sewage flowing from the ORG away from your home and helps prevent stormwater from entering it
- ensuring the ORG is raised above ground level to prevent water entering. When the ORG is surrounded by grass it must be 75mm above ground level.

If the ORG is raised too high it may be above floor level and, in the event of a blockage, sewage in the sanitary drains may back up and overflow out of floor wastes inside the house.

If the ORG cannot be raised to its correct height, an inflow prevention device may need to be fitted to it.



Overflow relief gully.

## Maintain your property's sewerage pipes

You can also prevent stormwater entering the sewerage system on your property by:

- never covering or obstructing sewer maintenance holes or ORGs
- never planting trees over or around sewer lines
- never connecting stormwater downpipes to your property's ORG or sewer pipes
- ensuring your property's stormwater downpipes drain roof water a minimum of one metre away from your house
- ensuring any broken water pipes on your property are repaired immediately ensuring your home's internal drainage pipes are in good condition.

***If you think there may be an issue with your ORG call Council for advice.***

For more information, visit  
[www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/mywater](http://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/mywater)

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## Keeping stormwater out of the sewerage network



## Inflow and infiltration

Most householders don't realise that the sewerage network and the stormwater network are two quite different systems. They are designed to keep stormwater out of sewage and vice versa. It is illegal to allow stormwater to drain into sewers.

During very wet weather a large amount of stormwater entering the sewerage network is likely to overload it. This increases the chances of sewage backing up in the system and spilling into streets, parks, beaches or even into people's homes.

It is important that all community members make an effort to prevent stormwater from entering the sewerage network where possible.

If Tweed Shire Council finds an illegal or inappropriate stormwater-to-sewer connection on your property's drainage system, you will be issued with a notice to explain the fault and what actions are required.

# The sewerage network is not meant for stormwater

## Inflow and infiltration explained

Inflow and infiltration are terms used to describe how stormwater enters the sewerage network, adding to the sewage discharged from bathrooms, sinks and toilets.

**Inflow** refers to stormwater entering the sewerage network via illegal or inappropriate plumbing.

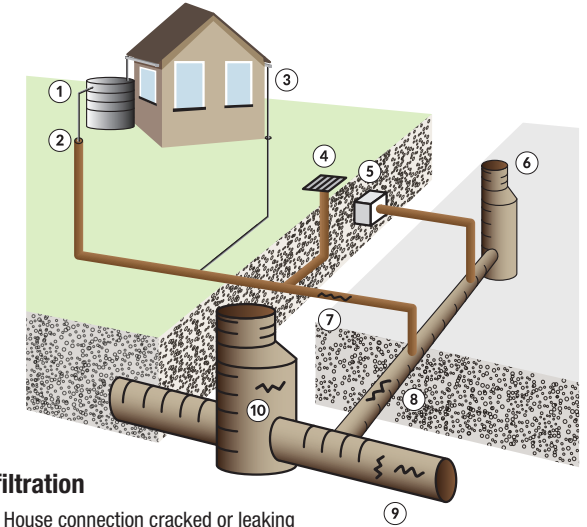
**Infiltration** refers to stormwater entering underground infrastructure via cracks and faulty joints.

Council is committed to reducing the amount of stormwater entering the sewerage network in order to:

- prevent sewage overflows to creeks, rivers, parks and private property
- lower sewage pumping and treatment costs
- defer the need for expensive upgrades to sewerage infrastructure
- enhance the quality of our waterways.

### Inflow

- ① Rainwater tank overflow illegally discharging to sewer
- ② Low overflow relief gully
- ③ Illegal downpipe connection
- ④ Illegal yard drain
- ⑤ Illegal storm drain connection
- ⑥ Leaking maintenance hole cover



### Infiltration

- ⑦ House connection cracked or leaking
- ⑧ Local sewer main cracked or leaking
- ⑨ Interceptor – cracked or leaking joint
- ⑩ Basewalls of maintenance hole cracked or leaking

*Sources of inflow and infiltration on private properties*

## Council investigates problem areas

Council is rolling out an investigation program targeting priority areas where wet weather sewage overflows occur most often. Crews use smoke and dye testing and CCTV cameras to pinpoint the places where stormwater is entering the sewerage network.

When we identify an illegal or inappropriate stormwater-to-sewer connection on private property, we notify the property owner and advise where repairs are required.



*Smoke testing used to pinpoint the places where stormwater is entering the sewerage network.*