

GLEN INNES MATTERS



Our crew removes a tangle of mattress springs during their clean-up of Omaru Creek in Glen Innes.

Clean waterways a community concern

Recently, one of our maintenance crews urgently attended a call-out at Omaru Creek in Glen Innes.

They found sewage was overflowing into the creek from private and public wastewater pipes. Acting quickly, they worked to find out what was causing the overflows and found there were blockages in the pipes caused by local residents putting rubbish and fat down their drains.

We call such instances 'dry weather' overflows because they are not caused by too much stormwater entering the wastewater network. Dry weather overflows occur when there is a build-up of fat or rubbish like wet wipes in a pipe. These things don't break down in water. Instead, they form large clumps that block pipes and cause overflows.

Although we aren't responsible for fixing blockages or overflows on private properties, our crew cleared

the private blockage and cleaned the surrounding area, as they believed immediate action was required to protect the environment. They flushed Omaru Creek with clean water and carried out water-quality testing over five days. During this time, they also removed a huge amount of rubbish that was clogging the waterway, including rotting mattresses, beer cans, floor mops and kids' toys. We are now confident there is no longer any wastewater contamination in the creek.

We all have a responsibility to ensure our waterways are kept clean. We've been working closely with Maungakiekie-Tāmaki Local Board chairperson, Josephine Bartley, who says she was shocked and saddened to see the state of the stream. She told us that it's important that the local community works together to take responsibility for our environment – and this includes our local waterways – to stop this happening again.

FOOD OUTLETS VISITED



Last week, staff from Watercare visited food outlets in Glen Innes with information on how to dispose of hot fat, grease and oils correctly.

When cooking juices are poured down the sink, they can harden and cause blockages in pipes.

Help to reduce local overflows

Every time you flush the toilet, pull the plug from a sink or have a shower, the wastewater drains into your private plumbing and out to our network.

While the wastewater that enters our network is mostly water, it also contains human waste, food scraps, fats, debris, chemicals and pharmaceuticals. Some of this can build up in private and public pipes, causing overflows which can be harmful to our health, harbours and waterways. This is why it is important for all of us to think about what we pour or flush down our private drains.

Did you know?

78% of overflows during fine weather are caused by people pouring fat down the sink, flushing rubbish down the toilet, and planting trees next to pipes in your area.



Toilet

Flush away toilet paper and human waste

- Don't flush:**
- wet wipes
 - sanitary products
 - nappies
 - rags

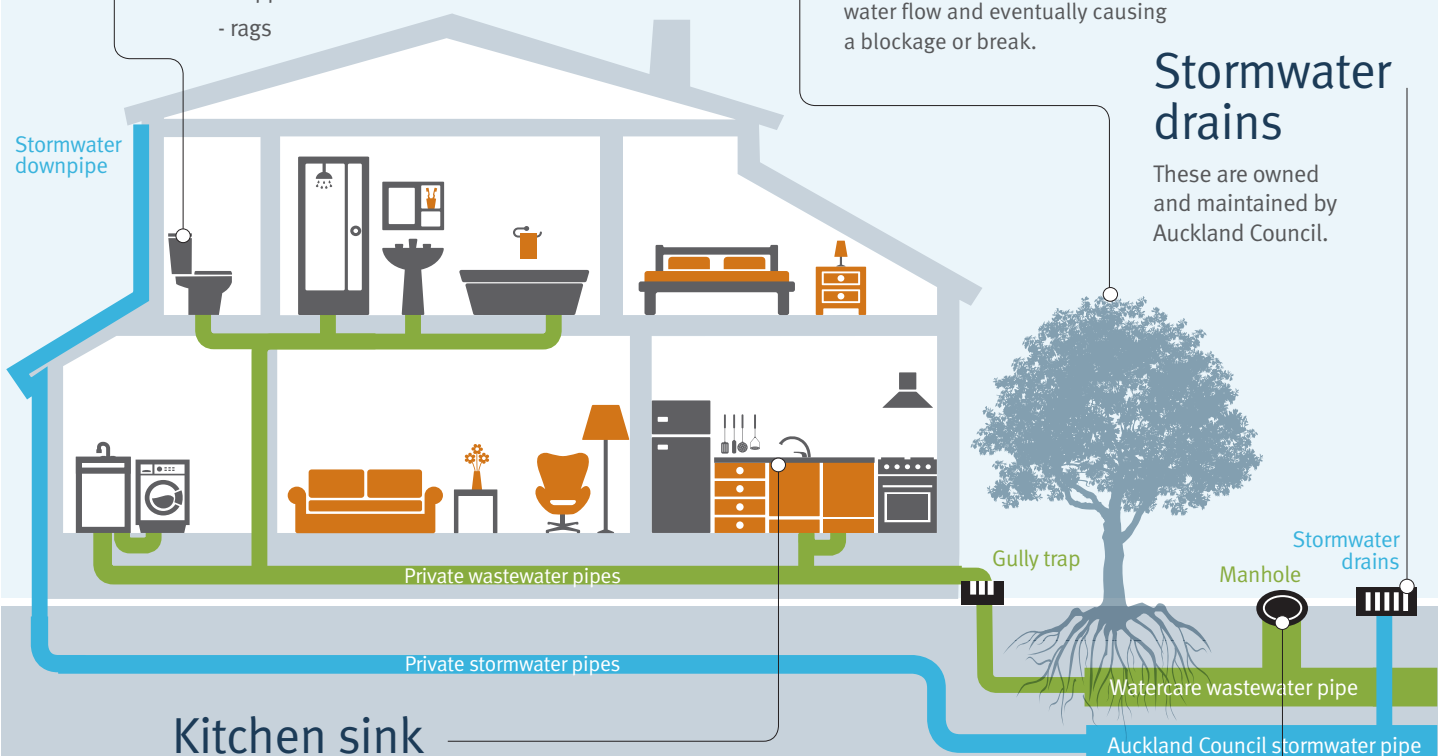
Tree planting

Plan your planting

Before planting a tree it's a good idea to check that it's not going to grow over your pipes or ours. As trees mature so do their roots and, over time, they can reach pipes and damage them, obstructing the water flow and eventually causing a blockage or break.

Stormwater drains

These are owned and maintained by Auckland Council.



Kitchen sink

Let cooking juices cool, then scrape the fat into the bin

- Don't pour hot cooking juices down the plug hole.** Once cool, the fats in the cooking juices harden and may block your pipes or ours.

Manholes

Give us a call

If you come across an overflow from a manhole, please phone us on (09) 442 2222. We're available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Contact us

Glen Innes Matters is your newsletter. If you would like to talk to us about any stories from this edition or your ideas for future issues, we'd love to hear from you. To get in touch, please phone our communications team on (09) 442 2222 or email info@water.co.nz.