

How can I fix it?

It is important to set up your storm water and septic system separately. Water from rainwater tanks and storm drains must not be connected to a septic system!

If you find storm water connected to your septic system, it must be disconnected and diverted to either the street water table (kerb), storm water connection point (if provided) or onto your own land.

Please contact Council or your plumber for more advice.

What is Council doing?

Storm water intrusion may be difficult to detect as it is not always obvious where the problem is occurring.

Council will be embarking on a proactive program of visual inspection and smoke testing of all properties connected to the CWMS. If a problem is found, Council will seek the co-operation of the landowner to undertake repairs where appropriate to prevent the ingress of stormwater.

Council's main aim is to identify where illegal pipe connections exist and to advise property owners how to rectify the problem.

Any issues will be noted and letters will be sent to the owner to rectify the problem. In most cases the cost to rectify an illegal connection would be minimal and property owners may be able to do the work themselves. For those who can't, Council has notified all local plumbers of the detection program so that they are aware of the requirements involved.

Can I receive a fine from Council?

Council can apply fines and issue maintenance orders to property owners who have illegal connections to the CWMS, however Council would prefer to work with residents to overcome problems as they are found.

By reducing storm water intrusion into the CWMS Council can continue to provide a cost effective service to residents. If nothing is done about this problem, it will lead to higher than normal increases in the annual CWMS operating and maintenance charge, due to increased operating costs.

Your understanding of the issues associated with storm water intrusion and your willingness to be part of the solution will benefit everyone who uses this service.

Would you like more information?

For assistance or advice please contact Council's CWMS Technical Officer Damian Lethbridge on 8391 7241.

email; council@dcmtbarker.sa.gov.au

website; www.dcmtbarker.sa.gov.au



Storm Water Intrusion Program

Protecting our waste water system

What is storm water intrusion?

Storm water intrusion is where storm water has been allowed to flow into a septic system. This is illegal under the Plumbing Code and the Department of Health Waste Control Standards. Under these regulations all excess rainwater collected from areas such as roofs, gardens, roads and rainwater tanks need to be plumbed away from the septic system.

Why is storm water intrusion a problem?

- Council operates a Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) in townships which treats the effluent from septic tanks via a network of pipes leading to a centralised treatment facility in Mount Barker.
- When it rains, excess water enters the system resulting in an increase in the amount of water to be processed from 3 million litres in a day to up to 7.5 million litres, pushing the plant operations to capacity.

Where does the excess stormwater come from?

- Common sources include illegally plumbed stormwater systems from areas such as roofs, gardens, roads and rainwater tanks. Much of the problem also lies underground so you may have inherited the problem or not be aware of where your pipes actually go.

What does this mean to you?

- Stormwater that is connected to Council's CWMS network is classed as an illegal connection.
- Excess water entering the system results in overloading of the pipe network, higher running costs, call outs due to high level alarms and unnecessary strain on the treatment systems. At worst, overflows of the system can occur including into private properties or local creeks.
- In addition to this is the unnecessary cost and processing of treating stormwater which the system is not designed to accept.
- Higher running costs also result in less funding available to maintain and upgrade the facility which can result in an increased operating and maintenance charge to ratepayers.

How do I know if it's set up properly?

You may have bought your house without knowing that your storm water system was previously connected illegally to your septic system or the associated pipe work, (by using outside gully traps or inspection points to dispose of stormwater).
The diagram below shows how connections may be placed.

Council can provide helpful advice for you to determine if a connection is illegal. For assistance or advice please contact Council's CWMS Technical Officer, Damian Lethbridge, on 8391 7241 (email; council@dcmtbarker.sa.gov.au or go on-line to Council's website; www.dcmtbarker.sa.gov.au)

What not to do

The most important thing to remember is not to have any rainwater or storm water connected to pipes that go to septic tank systems or to sewer drains.

- DO NOT connect rainwater to sewer drains
- DO NOT connect storm water to septic tanks
- DO NOT connect storm water downpipe discharges to gully traps

