

CLEARING OF BLOCKED HOUSE DRAINS WITHIN PRIVATE PROPERTIES POLICY

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY



1 Scope

This policy applies where it can be reasonably determined that a sewerage blockage exists in a private house drain and is within Rockhampton Regional Council's reticulated sewer service area.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to confirm and clarify Council's position in relation to Fitzroy River Water undertaking works on house drains to clear a blockage.

3 Related Documents

3.1 Primary

Nil

3.2 Secondary

Local Government Act 2009

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018

Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008

Clearing of Blocked House Drains within Private Properties Procedure

4 Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

Council	Rockhampton Regional Council
Customer	The owner, owner's agent, licensed plumber or occupier of a property within the Region, which is connected to FRW's water and sewerage system.
Customer Service	The first point of contact within Council for all customers, including any after hours service engaged by Council or FRW.
Employee	Local government employee: (a) The Chief Executive Officer; or (b) A person holding an appointment under section 196 of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
FRW	Fitzroy River Water, a commercialised business unit of Council that provides water and sewerage services.
FRW Dispatch	The unit within Council responsible for the customer service interface for FRW and the coordination of FRW's Network Operations crews.
House Drain	Privately owned sewers that deliver sewage from household and business customers to the Council sewerage network.

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Private Plumber	A plumber, engaged by a customer, who holds a Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) Plumbing and Drainage Trade Contractor License.
Region	Rockhampton Regional Area defined by the Local Government Areas of Queensland.
Sewer Infrastructure	Infrastructure used to receive, transport and treat sewage or effluent, including, for example; sewers, maintenance holes, vents, engines, pumps, structures, machinery and outfalls vested in Council as the sewerage service provider.

5 Policy Statement

It is not intended that FRW undertake work of any kind on private house drains or clear house drain blockages, as such work would see FRW, as a sewerage service provider, competing within the private sector.

Customers requesting assistance for what appears to be a house drain fault are advised by Council's Customer Service to contact a private plumber for assistance unless one has already been contacted and has identified an issue with Council infrastructure.

FRW Network Operation employees will promptly respond to customer service calls for assistance to customers where the fault appears to be within Councils sewer infrastructure.

Should a private plumber's assessment of the house drain determine the blockage/fault to be within Council's sewer infrastructure, Council will make reimbursement of up to a maximum of \$400 upon FRW verification of the blockage location/cause. This amount is based on current market rates and timeframes and is deemed sufficient to allow for an accurate assessment to be carried out and the likely location of the blockage determined. Should CCTV inspection determine that the blockage location/cause is not within Councils sewer infrastructure, the reimbursement application is denied.

Reimbursement requested for sums greater than \$400 are investigated and the circumstances given consideration by the Manager Water and Wastewater or Coordinator Network Operations. Any additional costs are not reimbursed, such as, but not limited to:

- (a) Maintenance work or modifications to the house drain;
- (b) Machine hire (vac truck, excavator, etc);
- (c) Plumbing materials or any reinstatement costs;
- (d) Additional labour costs due to inability to access the house drain, for example structures or items located over inspection openings, etc.; and
- (e) Any additional costs incurred following verification that the blockage location/cause is within Councils sewer infrastructure, for example future private plumber attendance or follow up CCTV inspection by parties other than FRW.

In order to be eligible for a reimbursement, Council must be notified immediately of the blockage/fault so its location/cause can be verified, and any rectification works completed and service restored.

Council recovers all costs incurred by Council if the private plumber's assessment is found to be incorrect and the blockage location/cause is within the house drain. All charges are in accordance with FRW's private works charges.

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6 Review Timelines

This policy is reviewed when any of the following occur:

- (a) The related information is amended or replaced; or
- (b) Other circumstances as determined from time to time by Council.

7 Document Management

Sponsor	Chief Executive Officer
Business Owner	General Manager Regional Services
Policy Owner	Manager Water and Wastewater
Policy Quality Control	Legal and Governance



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