

# STORMWATER DRAINAGE DAMAGE

## STORMWATER DRAINAGE ISSUES

Stormwater drainage issues often occur when objects such as tree roots and debris block the underground stormwater pipes on your property.

Here are some answers to some of the most commonly asked questions.

### Responsibility for stormwater drainage

A property owner is responsible for the services to their property. This includes sewer and stormwater pipes and services that run through or adjoin private and public land until they reach infrastructure drainage points. This discharge location is known as the Legal Point of Discharge (LPOD). All drainage issues beyond this point are the responsibility of Council.

All drainage infrastructure related to the drainage of private properties up to the Legal Point of Discharge is the responsibility of the property owner. This includes sections of pipe in the nature strip or road reserve that discharge stormwater to the kerb or pipe connections (tapping) to a Council drain.

The property owner is responsible for ensuring that storm water pipes are connected to the Council nominated Legal Point of Discharge and that their stormwater runoff does not affect other property owners.

For issues relating to private drainage it is recommended you contact a plumber to investigate. Council is only responsible for ensuring that Council stormwater drains, pits and the kerb and channel are operating effectively.

### The pipe under my driveway is blocked. Who's responsible for its maintenance?

Any sections of pipe within an open drain or underneath private driveways or vehicle crossings, including the driveway or vehicle crossing itself, are the responsibility of the property owner. Under Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act, Council may require the mandatory

maintenance and or replacement of these piped sections at any time if they are deemed to be causing a restriction to the flow of water in the open channel or do not meet Council's minimum standards.

Pipes under private driveways are the responsibility of the property owner. The property owner is responsible for ensuring storm water is not obstructed by blockages at these piped sections.

### The Council storm water pit in my street is blocked. Who do I call?

Blocked storm water drains can be reported to Council's Cleansing and Maintenance Department. Cleansing requests can be lodged with Council's Customer Service on 1300 179 944.

### The water supply main at the front of my property has burst. Who do I contact?

Water supply mains are maintained by City West Water. Should you have any emergency in regard to water flowing either on the road or into your property from a burst water main, please call City West Water's emergency number on 132 642.

### What causes my pipes to leak?

The most common cause of pipe leakage is old terracotta/earthenware pipes which may have deteriorated, cracked or be leaking at the joints due to age.

As Hobsons Bay contains reactive soil, movement is likely to occur in the surrounding soils resulting in joint failure or cracking causing moisture and nutrients to leak into the soil. Failure of joints between terracotta/earthenware and PVC is common.

It is important to consider repairing or replacing old infrastructure.

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## How can trees and their roots impact my services?

Tree roots grow wherever conditions are favourable and are opportunistic. When tree roots come into contact with water or nutrients they will grow with increasing concentration.

Tree roots will usually enter pipes that have a fault, which allows the tree roots to access the available water, nutrients and oxygen.

Tree roots can enter services via leaking joints or blocked pipes, through deteriorated seals where the joint has failed or been dislodged or through previous damage. It is very rare for a tree root to crack into a properly installed and well maintained pipe.

Once a pipe is damaged or deteriorated, roots from all different types of trees, plants and even grasses will grow into the pipe.

Council does not accept liability for this type of damage or tree root entry if the pipes are cracked or leaking.

## How can I prevent tree root damage to my services?

The most efficient way to prevent root damage to your services is to replace old terracotta/earthenware pipes with new PVC ones and use pressure seals. Other methods include the type and compaction of the backfill around these areas.

## Submitting an Incident Notification

If you believe a Council tree has caused damage to your services you will need to provide evidence to Council that the Council street tree has actually overtly caused the damage to your property while the roots are exposed.

An assessment of this is by way of a geotechnical (soil engineer) report and

structural engineers report with accompanying photos. Council should be contacted before any rectification work is undertaken. The reports will be required to establish whether in fact Council tree roots have caused the problem or if the pipe has been damaged due to other reasons.

Once the relevant evidence is obtained an **Incident Notification Form** for assessment for loss or damage arising from an incident involving street trees, can be found on the Hobsons Bay City Council website.

1. Complete the form in full.
2. Provide documentation from a geotechnical and structural engineer and photographs as required.
3. Sign and date the form.
4. Submit the completed form along with supporting documentation and photographs to:

**Property and Insurance Officer**  
**Hobsons Bay City Council**  
**PO Box 21, Altona VIC 3018**  
**Telephone: 1300 179 944**  
**Email:**

[incident@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au](mailto:incident@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au)



**HOBSONS BAY  
LANGUAGE LINE**

**9932 1212**

INTERPRETER SERVICE FOR ALL LANGUAGES

AND RECORDED COUNCIL INFORMATION IN:

English	العربية	Ελληνικά
Italiano	ကဵုဒိၣ်န့ၣ်	Tiếng Việt
粵語	Македонски	普通话

**Your Council in your language**

**Hobsons Bay City Council**

115 Civic Parade, Altona  
PO Box 21, Altona 3018


Telephone (03) 9932 1000  
Fax (03) 9932 1039

NRS phone 133 677 and quote 03 9932 1000

Email [customerservice@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au](mailto:customerservice@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au)

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