

## Sewer Blockages

Problems in the sewerage system generally occur within the pipes, stopping the flow of sewage away from your home.

Responsibility for the maintenance of this network of pipes is shared between the property owner and water Corporation.

For customers connected to a pressure sewer system in the townships of Alberton, Poowong, Loch and Nyora, refer to the Homeowner's Guide below.



### [Pressure Sewer System Homeowner Guide](#)

#### What is my responsibility?

The property owner is responsible for all of the fittings and pipes inside the property to the connection point with South Gippsland Water's pipes. South Gippsland Water refers to this connection point as a '27A' and generally this point will be near the property boundary.

Any pipes and fittings on the owner's side of the South Gippsland Water connection point (27A) including the Boundary Trap (BT) and the Inspection Shaft (IS) are the responsibility of the property owner. This means any repairs, replacement or maintenance costs associated with these pipes and fittings are the responsibility of the property owner.

#### What happens if my pipes are not maintained?

If you don't take precautions, your sewer may become blocked. The most common causes of sewer blockage include:



- Tree roots penetrating the pipe.
  - A build-up of oils and fats that have been put down the sink.
- Foreign materials such as sanitary products and food scraps that have been flushed or put down the sink.
- Damaged and broken pipes can allow soil and pieces of the pipe to block the sewer.

#### How can I maintain my pipes?

The best maintenance is prevention:

- When planting trees, always check with a nursery for advice.
- Make sure you are disposing of your household waste appropriately.

- Do not pour oils, fats and food scraps down the sink or toilet.
- Do not dispose of sanitary products and cotton buds down the toilet.
- Regularly engage a plumber to check your sewer pipes and clean them if necessary.

### **What happens when a blockage occurs?**

This will depend on the severity of the blockage. Some may only cause sinks to drain more slowly, others can cause sewage to spill from gully traps outside or even spill from the toilet or basin inside the house.

### **What should I do if I have a blockage?**

You need to determine exactly where the problem is. If you cannot tell, call South Gippsland Water on 1300 851 636 or (03) 5682 0444.

- If the blockage is in the Property Service Drain, the property owner is responsible and will need to engage a plumber.
- If the blockage is in the Sewer Connection Drain, South Gippsland Water will fix the problem at no cost.
- If it is unclear as to where the blockage is please contact South Gippsland Water. Our team will then clear the blockage at our cost if in the blockage is in South Gippsland Water responsible Sewer Connection Drain, or provide you with options for clearing the blockage in your pipes.

For more information on which pipes you are responsible for and the process to rectify a blockage please see detailed brochure below.

Brochures:

[Sewer Blockages What pipes are you responsible for](#)

### **Tree Roots & Sewer Blockages**

**Most sewer blockages are caused by tree roots finding their way into our sewer pipes!**

Trees are beautiful, shady and provide valuable shelter for local fauna, but their root systems can have a devastating effect on your sewer pipes. Planted too close to the sewer, your beautiful tree could one day end up becoming a very costly and messy problem.

### **How do tree roots get into the sewer?**

Tree roots grow in search of water and nutrients, which makes sewers a prime target. If planted too close, a tiny fracture or small gap in the join of two sewer pipes could be wide enough for a single hair-like tree root to pass through. Once inside, a mass of roots can form and eventually lead to a sewer blockage.

### **What can I do?**

The most effective step is prevention, as once tree roots get into the system, pipes can become damaged and require costly repairs.

We recommend:

- Regularly maintain and clean your sewer pipes
- Visit your nearest Water Saver Garden Centre for advice on what to plant near sewers (a list of species to avoid are listed below)
- You can obtain a copy of your property sewerage plan to determine the location and type of any sewer pipes – and use this information to avoid planting anything above your sewer line.

You can easily request a Property Sewerage Plan by completing the 'Request for Property Drain & Sewer Information Form' found on the [Forms](#) page, or by contacting South Gippsland Water on 1300 851 636.

### How do I report a blockage?

If you believe there is a blockage in the South Gippsland Water sewer pipes serving your property, please call our 7 day, 24 hour faults and emergencies team on (03) 5682 0444 or 1300 851 636.

### Who is responsible for fixing the problem?

You are responsible for any repair, replacement or maintenance for the pipes and fittings within your property until after the connection point to South Gippsland Water's pipes (usually near your property boundary).

### We suggest that the following Plants no closer than 2 metres to a sewer pipe

<i>Acacia buxifolia</i> Box-leaved Wattle	<i>Brachychiton populneus</i> Kurrajong	<i>Euonymus Japonica</i> Evergreen Spindle Tree	<i>Malus (species)</i> Flowering Crabapples
<i>Acacia melanoxydon</i> Blackwood	<i>Callistemon citrinus</i> Crimson Bottlebrush	<i>Ficus pumila</i> Creeping Fig	<i>Pittosporum revoluta</i> Brisbane Laurel
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> Sycamore	<i>Eucalyptus calophylla</i> 'Rosea' Pink Marri	<i>Genista tinctoria</i> Broom	<i>Pittosporum undulatum</i> Sweet Pittosporum
<i>Alnus jorrulensis</i> Evergreen Alder	<i>Eucalyptus falcata</i> White Mallee	<i>Jacaranda spp.</i> Jacaranda	Australian Pyracantha (species)
<i>Banksia ericifolia</i> Heath Banksia	<i>Eucalyptus goniocalyx</i> Long-leaved Box	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i> Liquidambar, Sweet Gum	
<i>Banksia occidentalis</i> Water Bush	<i>Eucalyptus largiflorens</i> River Box, Black Box	<i>Loganstroemia indica</i> Pink Crepe Myrtle	
<i>Betula pendula (B. alba)</i> Silver Birch	<i>Eucalyptus pruinosa</i> Silver Box	<i>Nerium oleander</i> Oleander	

**Plant no closer than 4 metres to a sewer pipe**

<i>Angophora costata</i> Smooth-barked Apple Myrtle	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> "Aurea" Golden Ash	<i>Sophora japonica</i> Pagoda Tree
<i>Betula pendula</i> Silver Birch	<i>Melaleuca armillaris</i> Bracelet Honeymyrtle	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> Rowan, Mountain Ash
<i>Eucalyptus cinerea</i> Argyle Apple	<i>M. styphelioides</i> Prickly Paperbark	<i>Wisteria sinensis</i> Chinese Wisteria