

Wastewater (sewer) network investigation & maintenance program



What is happening?

Cairns Regional Council's Utility Services team conducts annual inspections and maintenance of the wastewater (sewer) network. A sewer maintenance hole, commonly known as a manhole, is an access point to the sewer mains. These vertical shafts provide Council's utility workers with the ability to inspect, clean, and maintain the sewer pipelines.

Why is it happening?

The purpose of this program is to:

- Identify and fix any faults that may have developed
- Assess the condition of the infrastructure to help plan future maintenance and extend the life of the network
- Reduce the risk of sewage overflows during periods of heavy rain

What is involved in sewer pipe maintenance?

Step 1 – Manhole Inspection

Council will inspect sewer manholes to confirm their location, check access, and assess their condition.

Step 2 – Remedial Works (if needed)

Depending on the inspection results, Council may need to complete some repairs, such as:

- Raising the manhole lid to ground level for easier future access
- Repairing the manhole to keep it structurally sound

Step 3 – Cleaning

Once access is confirmed, Council will carry out high-pressure cleaning of the manhole and nearby sewer pipes.

There's a small chance this could cause water to briefly back up through your home's plumbing, possibly leading to water "spurting" from drains or toilets.

To help prevent this, you can:

- Keep toilet lids closed
- Cover floor drains with mats
- Use plugs in sinks and bathtubs

Step 4 – CCTV Inspection

After cleaning, Council will use CCTV cameras to inspect the underground pipes and assess their condition.

The results of this program may lead to additional work as part of the Manhole Rehabilitation Program and/or the Sewer Relining Program.

How does it affect me?

Some manholes are on private property, and Council may need to access them as part of our work. This is allowed under the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008. If your property is affected, we'll send you a letter with all the details.

Don't worry – we won't need to go inside your home or any buildings, and you don't need to be there, as long as we can get to the manhole. If the scheduled date or time doesn't suit you, or if we need to plan around things like locked gates or pets, just let us know – we'll do our best to find a time that works.

Your water and wastewater services won't be interrupted, but you might notice a bit more activity, some noise, or occasional odours in the area while we're working.



Scan the QR code for more information