

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS



The Western Downs is a flat region which offers advantages for construction, however it can make it difficult to manage stormwater on your property. Each property owner is responsible for ensuring that stormwater flows to the approved point of discharge. This Fact Sheet outlines responsibilities of stormwater management in the Western Downs.

DRAINAGE AND STORMWATER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Incorrectly managed or maintained stormwater systems on residential properties results in a significant volume of complaints received by Council each storm season. We all have a role to play in managing stormwater to avoid impacts on neighbours and issues for our properties.

Owner's responsibility:

Owners of residential properties are required to manage stormwater and 'overland flow' on their property. An approved and compliant stormwater system must be installed and maintained at your residence.

Installation and maintenance of roof gutters, downpipes, subsoil drains, stormwater pipes and gully pits should allow water to travel to the 'legal point of discharge'. Being proactive and prepared ahead of major rain will help prevent stormwater issues including water entering your home.

Legal points of discharge:

A legal point of discharge is a term Council uses for a stormwater pipe which is connected to an authorised Council stormwater drain or road. There are three ways of connecting stormwater to a legal point of discharge:

- Roof and surface water is conveyed to the kerb and channel;
- An inter-allotment drainage system in accordance with Australian Standard AS/NZS 3500.3.2:1998 (Clause 1.8)[^].
- Where grade does not permit the stormwater to be piped to a system of inter-allotment or subdivision drainage or street channel, via an underground pipe; a bubbler outlet of at least three (3) meters from the downstream side of the building foundations and no closer than three (3) meters to any property boundary must be installed.

[^]Inter-allotment drainage systems are private drainage systems installed on private properties by developers during subdivision construction to enable stormwater drainage from lots that cannot drain to the street. As these systems are private, all control, management and maintenance (including liability arising from damage caused by lack of maintenance or upkeep) is the responsibility of the relevant owners.

Overland Flow:

In times of heavy rain, some rainwater will pool and run from surfaces such as lawns, natural ground or slabs. This flow usually follows natural contours and slopes and may result in overland flow between properties. Water from your property to neighbouring properties can create issues and excavations, construction, fences or landscaping can change how water flows. For this reason it's important that you are aware how water flows from your property and that you work with neighbours to address any concerns.

Ideally, run-off on your property should be promoted towards the street, or to a drainage system if available. Cut-off drains and perimeter banks are helpful in directing run-off.

Stagnant water:

You must not restrict or redirect the flow of water in any way which will cause the water to pond and become stagnant. This does not apply to water collected in a dam, wetland, tank or pond if no offensive material can accumulate.

Disputes between neighbours:

An upstream property owner cannot be held liable simply because surface water flows naturally from their land onto neighbouring land. Issues with overland stormwater flow between neighbouring properties is generally a civil matter. Council has limited authority to resolve civil matters, which are typically handled by the State Government's Dispute Resolution Centre.

South Queensland Dispute Resolution Centre:
1800 017 288 | drc.sq@justice.qld.gov.au

Western Downs Regional Council:

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