

PARNELL MATTERS

We're working hard to prevent overflows

The January storm and Cyclone Gabrielle caused widespread damage to Auckland's water and wastewater networks and when you're out and about, you may still see the scars. One of the more complex issues is a broken wastewater pipe – about 25 metres below the iconic Parnell Rose Gardens.

Operations engineer Woo Kwon says when an overflow sensor alerted us to an issue with the Judges Bay branch sewer, we used remote-operated CCTV to assess the condition of the pipe.

The images confirmed a section of pipe was broken right in the heart of the rose gardens – about 25 metres below the surface.

"When we discovered the break earlier this month, our first priority was to set up a temporary solution that would prevent overflows on to people's properties or out into Judges Bay.

"The broken pipe normally carries wastewater from all the properties on the eastern side of Gladstone Rd, so it was really important to get a temporary solution to contain the wastewater as soon as possible."

Within two days of finding the break, we'd restored wastewater service by bypassing the broken section of pipe using an overland hose between a manhole on Judges Bay Rd and one on Gladstone Rd.

"The original set-up wasn't ideal because we wanted to stop the overflows as soon as possible," Woo says. "Once we'd contained the wastewater and had the bypass in place, we managed to move our generator and bypass pump to a flat spot in the rose gardens, and wrapped it to reduce any noise disruption for neighbours as much as possible.

"Within a week we'd also buried the overland pipe in Judges Bay Rd, which meant we could remove a temporary speed bump and open the road to both lanes of traffic again."

Now, the overland hose runs up the side of Judges Bay Rd, protected by road cones, and crosses Gladstone Rd, where a temporary speed bump has been installed. The original plastic ramps protecting the pipe have been replaced with hot mix, which minimises noise for neighbours.

"We're asking motorists to stick to the 30km/h speed limit when they go over our pipe on Gladstone Rd to protect their cars and the set-up we have in place."

Our planning team is exploring options for a permanent solution to the broken pipe, but given the complexity of the problem – particularly the depth of the break – there is no quick fix. The interim solution will likely be in place for months, while planning and consents are sought for a permanent repair.



Waitematā Local Board chairperson Genevieve Sage toured the temporary set-up with Watercare engineer Woo Kwon.

In the meantime, Woo hopes to be able to improve the temporary solution further by finding an alternative power source to the diesel generator.

"We've been doorknocking in the local community to let residents know about the situation and what we're doing to resolve it – and people have been really understanding and supportive. We'd like to thank everyone for their patience while we're working through this issue."

Waitematā Local Board chairperson Genevieve Sage has met with Woo to check out the temporary set-up.

"Woo and the team have done a fantastic job to get this solution in place to prevent overflows into Judges Bay. I'm really pleased to see they're doing everything they can to minimise disruption to the community.

"I know it's not an ideal situation, with a generator on Judges Bay Rd and the speed bump up on Gladstone Rd, but it's certainly there for a good reason – to protect our local waterways.

"Watercare is looking into the best option for a permanent solution, but it's important that it's not rushed and they find the best way forward."

Deputy Mayor Desley Simpson says it's more important than ever to be mindful of what you pour down the sink or flush down the toilet.

"With this temporary solution carrying a large part of Parnell's wastewater, it will be more susceptible to blockages, so residents and businesses need to do their bit to prevent overflows too. Please don't flush things like wet wipes down the toilet, and dispose of your cooking fats and oils by pouring them into newspaper and putting it in the bin."

Help to reduce local overflows

Blockages occur in our wastewater pipes when local residents and businesses pour fat down the sink and flush rubbish down the toilet. These items don't break down. Instead, they form large clumps that block pipes and cause overflows.

These overflows can be harmful to your health and the environment. So, for the whole community, please be careful about what you pour down your sink or flush down your toilet.

Here are some key tips to prevent wastewater overflows:

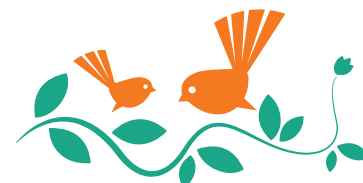
Toilet



Only flush the 3 Ps - poo, pee and (toilet) paper



Don't flush wet wipes, sanitary products, rags or other items that may block your pipes or ours.



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Visit watercare.co.nz/ebilling or scan the QR code to sign up in two steps.



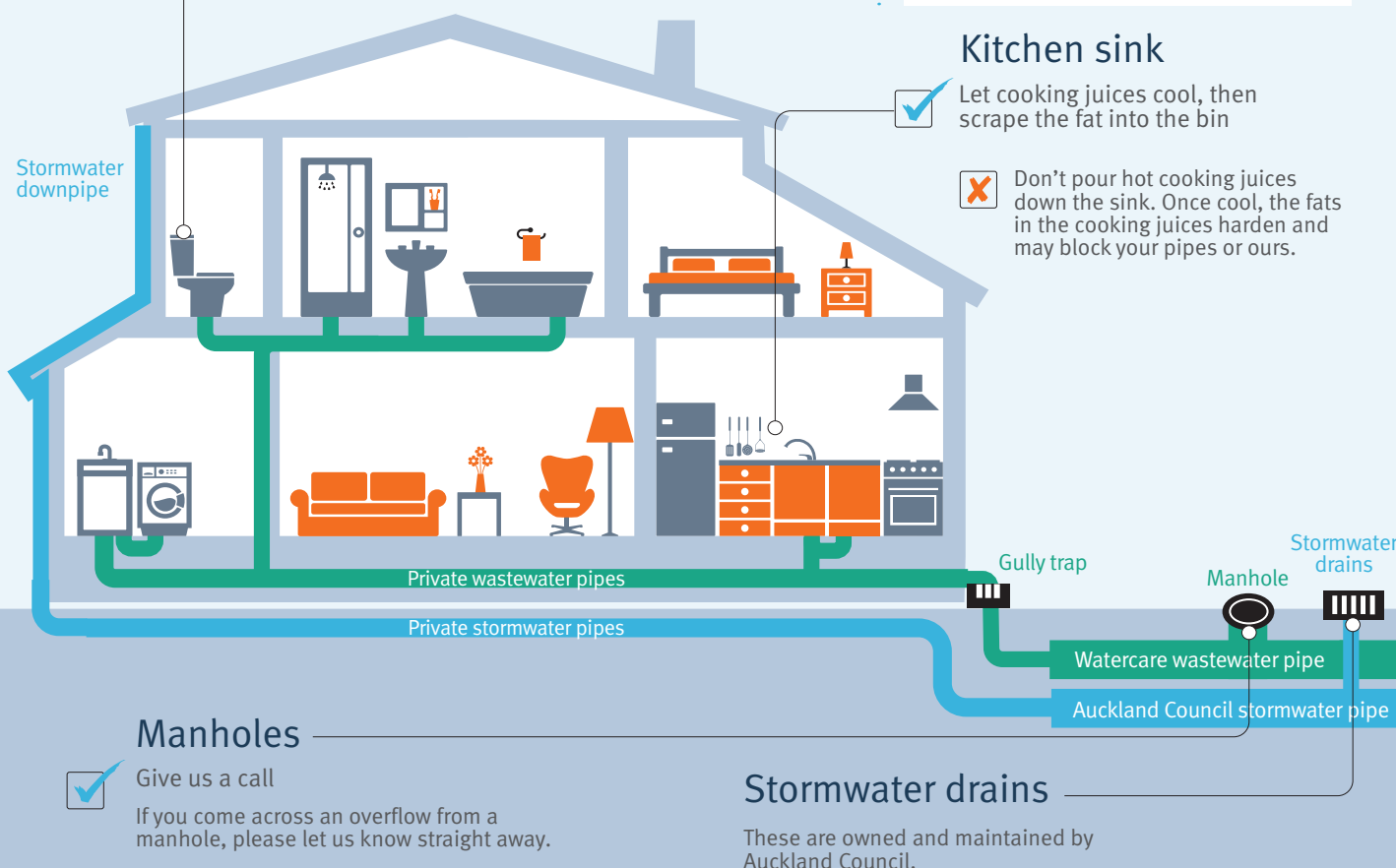
Kitchen sink



Let cooking juices cool, then scrape the fat into the bin



Don't pour hot cooking juices down the sink. Once cool, the fats in the cooking juices harden and may block your pipes or ours.



Manholes



Give us a call

If you come across an overflow from a manhole, please let us know straight away.

Stormwater drains

These are owned and maintained by Auckland Council.

Contact us: If you would like to provide your feedback on *Parnell Matters*, please email communications@water.co.nz.