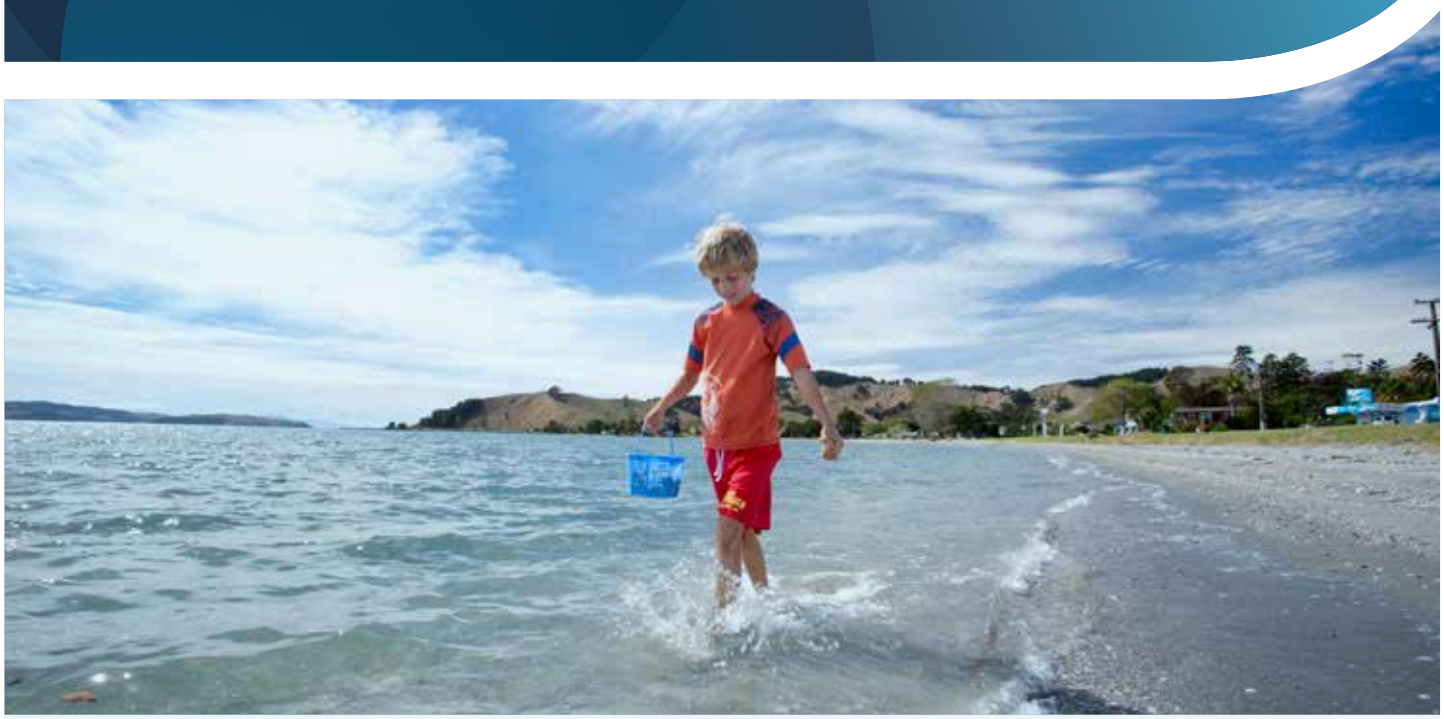
AUTUMN 2019

TAPPED IN

Bringing you news, updates and information from Watercare



Toby Runting enjoys paddling in the water at Kawakawa Bay. In 2012, the beach was deemed safe for swimming for the first time in 10 years. This was the result of Watercare commissioning the Kawakawa Wastewater Treatment Plant in 2011, enabling the removal of local septic tanks. Today, Watercare is working with Auckland Council on projects to improve beach water quality.

Cleaning up Auckland's beaches, waterways and backyards

Aucklanders love their beaches, local parks and backyards.[1] We love them too. Unfortunately, from time to time, our beautiful environment is affected by overflows.[2] However, it doesn't have to be this way.

We can all play a role in reducing overflows. We're doing our bit by expanding and upgrading the region's infrastructure and being careful in our operations. You can do your bit by being mindful of what you pour down the sink and flush down the toilet and by ensuring your property's private plumbing is correctly installed and maintained.

In this newsletter, we highlight ways we can reduce overflows together.

Understanding overflows

Rainy days

Overflows can happen when rain gets into wastewater pipes and overwhelms them. It causes manholes and purpose-built structures to overflow with stormwater and wastewater.

Did you know?

These overflows often affect our beaches, waterways and parks. Sometimes private properties are also affected.

Any day

Overflows can happen when there is a build-up of fat or items like wet wipes in a pipe. These things can form large clumps - sometimes called fatbergs - that block pipes and cause private gully traps and public manholes to overflow with wastewater.

Did you know?

Fatbergs can block pipes and cause wastewater to overflow into people's backyards as well as into local waterways and beaches. Sometimes they're private blockages – leading to plumbing bills – and sometimes they're public blockages.

1 In a recent survey conducted by Auckland Council, 1,541 Aucklanders were asked what would make a 'world-class city'. Half of the participants believe the fundamentals of a great city include a clean and unpolluted environment, while 69 per cent voted for clean beaches and waterways as a must-have in terms of enjoyment.

2 Overflows are one of the contributors to poor beach water quality. Other water contaminants include animal faeces, heavy metals and chemicals that wash off the street and into the stormwater network. After long spells of dry weather, rainfall can carry a 'first flush' of dirty water to our beaches.

Watercare
An Auckland Council Organisation

New infrastructure

The Central Interceptor is coming

We're making our waterways in central Auckland cleaner by building a super-sized wastewater tunnel to reduce overflows, creating a better environment for you to enjoy.

We're building a 13-kilometre-long, 4.5-metre-wide tunnel which will go between Western Springs and the Māngere Wastewater Treatment Plant. It will have several link sewers and shafts along the route for collecting and transferring wastewater into the tunnel.

The Central Interceptor is the largest wastewater project in Watercare's history. It is a key part of our region-wide wastewater strategy which focuses on supporting population growth while protecting the environment.

While we're building the Central Interceptor, we will also be working on further projects in the western isthmus, such as separating the stormwater and wastewater pipes. Together, the Central Interceptor and our western isthmus project will reduce overflows in the area by at least 80 per cent.

In March, we signed a contract with Ghella Abergeldie Joint Venture (GA) for the delivery of the project.

Our major wastewater projects

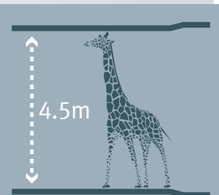
There are other major wastewater projects planned for Auckland over the next 20 years, listed below.

Treatment plant catchment area	Planned work
Warkworth, Snells/Algies 1	• Construct treatment plant
Army Bay 2	• Upgrade treatment plant • Upgrade Army Bay wastewater network
Rosedale 3	• Upgrade treatment plant • Construct Northern Interceptor • Upgrade North Shore wastewater network
Māngere 4	• Upgrade treatment plant • Construct Central and Southern Interceptors • Construct Howick diversion • Upgrade Ōtara wastewater network • Upgrade Newmarket gully wastewater pipes
Pukekohe 5	• Update treatment plant • Upgrade Pukekohe wastewater network
Clarks Beach, Waiuku 6	• Construct treatment plant

- **Cleaner waterways and beaches:** overflows will be significantly reduced in the central Auckland region.
- **Greener parks:** we'll leave public spaces in a better condition than we find them by planting two trees for every one we remove.
- **Better habitats:** we'll plant trees and remove weeds to bring the Norwood Reserve rock forest back to life.
- **Improved local waterways:** together with Mt Albert Grammar School and Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Ngā Maungārongo, we'll plant trees and build some fences along the water's edge.

Project build
2019 to 2025

13 kilometres
longest wastewater tunnel in NZ



high enough to fit a giraffe

wide enough to fit four rhino side by side

200,000m³ capacity
so we can store wastewater and control the flow rate into the treatment plant – that's equivalent to 80 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

Educational campaign

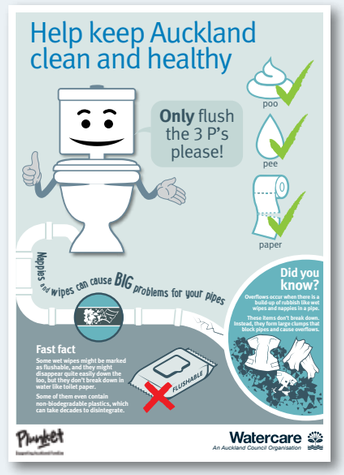
Watercare partners with Plunket

We have partnered with Plunket New Zealand to help families and whānau understand how they can protect their health and the local environment by being mindful of what they pour down the sink and flush down the toilet.

Many families throughout the Auckland region are unaware of fatbergs, which are congealed masses of fat, grease, wet wipes and other non-flushable items. Fatbergs can block pipes and cause wastewater to overflow into people's backyards as well as into local waterways and beaches. When non-biodegradable items are flushed down the toilet – particularly wet wipes – they are not only contributing to the growth of fatbergs, but they are also running the risk of a wastewater overflow at home and a plumbing bill for fixing blocked pipes.

We spend around $1 million each year preventing and removing blockages from Auckland's wastewater network and cleaning up overflows. The key message we want to say to everyone is to only flush the Three Ps – poo, pee and (toilet) paper. Everything else, including wipes – even if they're marked flushable – should be put in the bin.

Thousands of New Zealanders rely on Plunket to provide topical and relevant information and advice to help them to support their families and communities. This partnership is a chance to leverage both organisations' resources to let families know that we all play a part in reducing overflows and keeping our local environment healthy.



Key tips to help you prevent overflows

- **Only flush the 3 Ps** – poo, pee and (toilet) paper. Everything else, including wet wipes, should be placed in the bin.
- **Cool and collect** cooking fats, oil and grease in a covered container and put them in a rubbish bin.
- **Scrape** pots and pans into your rubbish bin before rinsing and washing.
- **Add a strainer** to your sink to catch food scraps and other solids that can collect with any fats and create a blockage.

Community programmes

Reducing rainy-day overflows

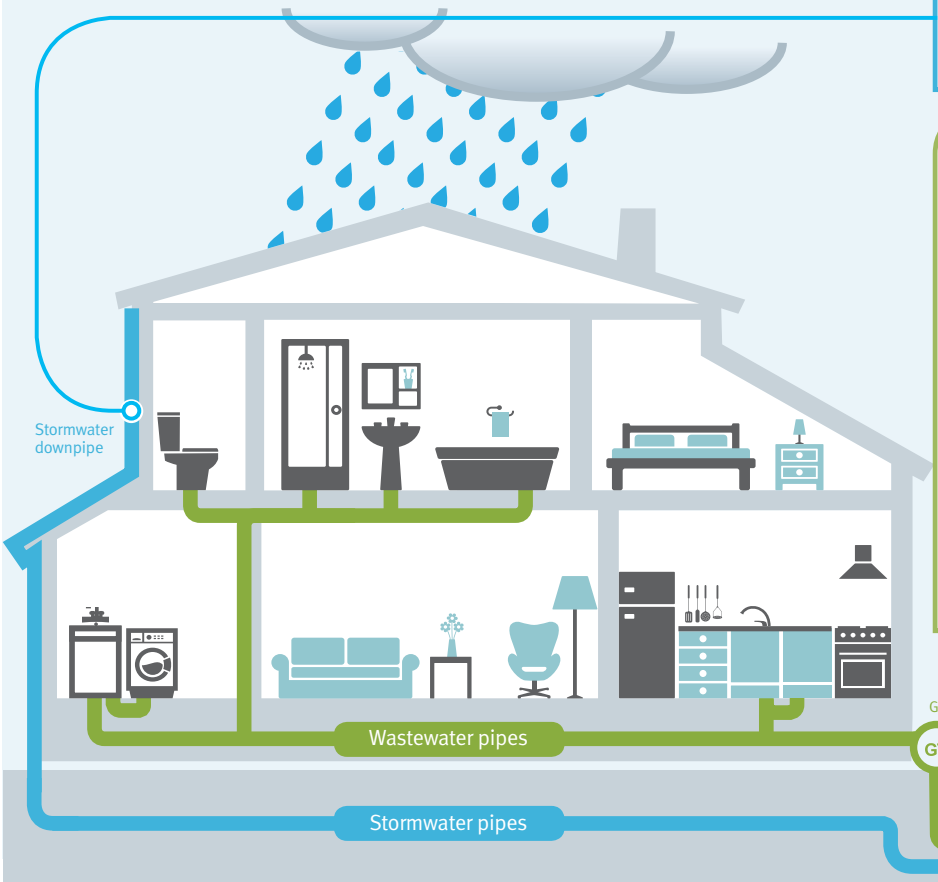
To help reduce overflows during wet weather, we carry out inspections and tests on the public wastewater and stormwater network and private drainage. We inspect wastewater pipes, stormwater downpipes and gully traps in a variety of ways, including:

- Smoke testing – harmless smoke, similar to what is used in discos and theatres, is used to pinpoint any places on a property where stormwater is entering our wastewater network or vice versa.
- Dye testing – non-toxic dye is poured down a specific drain so we can trace where the water ends up.
- CCTV camera inspections – a camera is inserted down the pipe to inspect internal conditions.

This year, we will be visiting suburbs around Auckland as part of our region-wide programme to reduce stormwater entering into the wastewater network. Households that require a property inspection will be notified by a letter in the mail, confirming when the investigation will take place.

How can you help prevent these overflows?

Check that your stormwater downpipes and gully traps are installed correctly, and landscaping and paved areas are draining into the stormwater network.

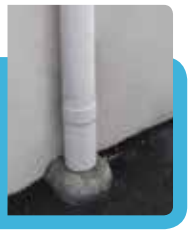


Downpipes

A downpipe collects rain (stormwater) from the roof and should connect to a stormwater system only.

A compliant downpipe:

- is separate from a gully trap
- connects to the stormwater pipes on your property



A non-compliant downpipe:

- is connected to a gully trap, so stormwater will enter wastewater pipes

Gully trap

Wastewater from your kitchen, bathroom and laundry exits your home through a gully trap, which is a basin in the ground.

A compliant gully trap:

- is raised off the ground
- is covered by a grate

A non-compliant gully trap:

- is level with the ground

Get in touch

We're available to deal with any overflows 24/7 – just phone us on (09) 442 2222. Once we know about it, we can send a crew out within the hour.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Tapped In is your newsletter. If you would like to talk to us about any stories from this edition or your ideas for future issues, we'd love to hear from you. To get in touch, please email our communications team at **communications@water.co.nz**. You can learn more about what we do at **www.watercare.co.nz.**