

COMBINED SANITARY DRAINS

Maintenance and plumbing assessment information

PLUMBING SERVICES | DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FACT SHEET



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Brisbane City Council is committed to keeping Brisbane clean and green. This fact sheet provides information to assist property owners and applicants understand the maintenance requirements and assessment process for combined sanitary drains.

What is a combined sanitary drain?

A combined sanitary drain is a private sanitary drain which connects two or more properties to one common Queensland Urban Utilities sewer connection point. The first property on the combined sanitary drain will usually have the Queensland Urban Utilities sewer connection with a private drain running through this and neighbouring connected properties. Current plumbing and drainage legislation does not allow the creation of combined sanitary drains, however in the early to mid 1900's it was an acceptable means of connecting multiple houses to the city's expanding sewerage infrastructure. Combined sanitary drain agreements, outlining the number of plumbing fixtures allowed to be installed on each property, were drawn up between the owners of the properties connected to the drain.

How do I find out if my property is connected to a combined sanitary drain?

To find out if you have a combined sanitary drain on your property, contact Council's Plumbing Services on 07 3403 8888. Copies of the sanitary drainage plan for the property and/or adjoining properties may be available for purchase from Council.

Who is responsible for maintaining combined sanitary drains?

The ongoing maintenance of a combined sanitary drain is the responsibility of the owners of the properties serviced by the drain. They are not owned by Council or Queensland Urban Utilities. Each owner must ensure that the section of the combined sanitary drain located within the boundaries of their property complies with the requirements of the

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018 section 70 and is kept in good condition and operating properly. Any defects that occur in the combined sanitary drain must be rectified by the owner of the property that contains the defective section of a drain. A permit must be obtained from Council before repairs are carried out.

Applications for plumbing and drainage works and combined sanitary drains

The discharge capacity of a combined sanitary drain depends on its size, e.g. a 100mm diameter drain has a discharge capacity of 165 fixture units at minimum fall. This is the maximum volume of wastewater that the drain can handle. Council equally apportions the maximum fixture unit loading across each individual lot that the drain passes through to ensure future development is accessible for all lots.

How an application for plumbing and drainage work is assessed depends on the nature of the work, whether a development approval is required and the apportioned fixture unit loading for the lot(s).

Where a development approval is required, it is likely the applicant will be required to come off the combined sanitary drain.

For all other applications, if the proposed work is above the allowable fixture unit loading, Council will issue an Information Request to the applicant requesting either revised plans indicating a reduction in the number of fixture units or to come off the combined sanitary drain.

If the proposed work is within the allowable fixture unit loading, Council will require the applicant to either replace the drain boundary to boundary on the lot or come off the

combined sanitary drain. Where the proposed work is for alterations to existing plumbing and drainage, Council will offer an additional option for the applicant to provide CCTV footage demonstrating that the drain is in good condition.

Combined sanitary drains are required to remain operational for all lots while the plumbing and drainage works are underway.

When coming off a combined sanitary drain, a new sewer connection will be required for the lot and all upstream lots. This process is undertaken with Queensland Urban Utilities.

How do I come off a combined sanitary drain?

Before deciding to come off a combined sanitary drain, the property owner should find out the location of the sewer and where their property is along the drain. If other upstream properties are connected to the drain, the property owner wishing to disconnect will be required to provide a new sewer connection to each of those properties as well as their own. For information relating to new sewer connections contact Queensland Urban Utilities.

Further information

For further information, contact Council's Plumbing Services team on 3403 8888.

Combined sanitary drains example

