

CLEARING SEWER BLOCKAGES IN PRIVATE PROPERTY PROCEDURE

1. Scope

The Clearing Sewer Blockages in Private Property Procedure (this 'Procedure') applies to all premises in the declared sewerage service area.

2. Purpose

This Procedure outlines Council's position in relation to undertaking repairs to and clearing blockages in the sewerage system and clarifies the responsibilities of Council and residents.

3. Related Documents

Primary

Retail Water and Sewerage Service Provider - Management and Functions Policy

Legislative reference

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018 s 70(1)

Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 ss 161, 676

4. Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions shall apply:

Council	Livingstone Shire Council.
Customer	An owner, owner's agent, private plumber or occupier of a property within Council's declared sewerage service area.
Declared Sewerage Service Area	The area declared by Council (at its meeting on 9 September 2014) as a sewerage service area pursuant to s 676(2) of the <i>Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008</i> and any subsequent amendments pursuant to s 161(6).
Local Government Area	As defined in the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
Premises	As defined in the <i>Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018</i> .
Private Drains	Privately owned sewers connected to Council's sewerage system.
Sewer Jump Up	The connection between the Council sewer and the private drain including the junction vertical riser and sufficient straight pipe to ensure the property connection fitting is located within the lot to be serviced.
Sewerage System	As defined in the <i>Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018</i> .

5. Procedure

Section 70(1) of the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018* requires the owner of premises to take all reasonable steps to ensure all plumbing and drainage on their premises is kept in good condition and operates properly.

It is not Council's intention to undertake repairs to, or clear blockages, in private drains as this would put Council in competition with private sector plumbers.

5.1 Responsibilities

The responsibilities for specific sections of the sewerage system are defined as follows:

a) Customer

The customer is responsible for maintaining and replacing if necessary, the private drain to the sewer jump up.

b) Council

Council is responsible for maintaining the sewerage system within the declared sewerage service area up to and including the sewer jump up.

5.2 Private Sector Plumbers

- a) Customers are to appoint a private sector plumber if the blockage appears to be in private drains.
- b) In the event a private sector plumber establishes a blockage is in Council's sewerage system, they must notify Council immediately to arrange for Council to clear the blockage.
- c) If the private sector plumber determines the blockage/fault is in Council's sewerage system, they will be reimbursed a maximum of one standard hour (up to a maximum \$250, to be indexed at 2% from 1 July 2023).
- d) Council is mindful that occasionally a reimbursement of greater than one hour may be sought. In these instances, the Manager Water & Waste Operations has the authority to assess and approve reimbursement if considered appropriate.
- e) If the private sector plumber makes an incorrect assessment and the blockage/fault is in the private drains, Council will recover all costs it incurs from the property owner using Council's private works rates as a basis for charging.

5.3 Attendance at Site

Council will attend premises to clear blockages:

- a) When blockages impact upon several neighbouring premises concurrently;
- b) If a private sector plumber has identified the blockage is in Council's sewerage system;
- c) If there is sewage inundation inside the premises; or
- d) On public holidays when a customer, after exhausting all avenues, is unable to engage a private sector plumber.

6. Changes to this Procedure

This Procedure is to remain in force until otherwise amended/replaced by the Executive Director Infrastructure.

7. Repeals/Amendments

Version	Date	Action
1.0	15/03/2022	New Procedure - Approved

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