



# Wastewater boundaries, responsibilities & blockages

A guide for home owners

# Sanitary products block pipes. Bin them.



**FREE  
THE POO**

[freethepoo.com.au](http://freethepoo.com.au)

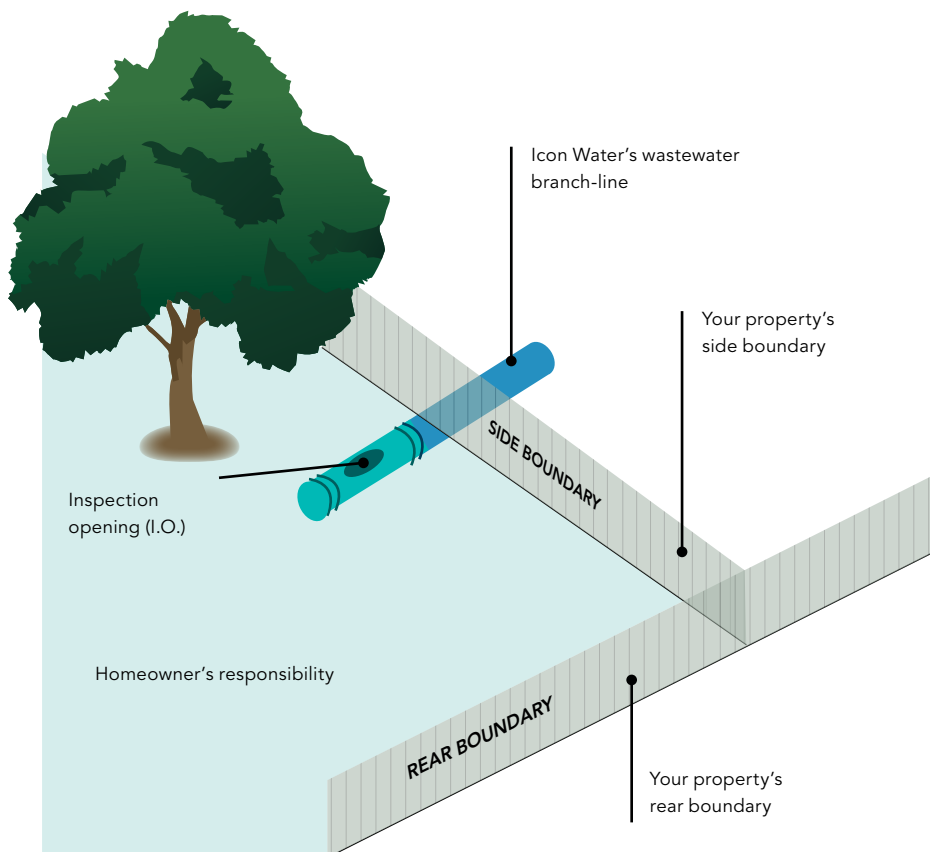
**icon**  
WATER

## Who is responsible for what?

You are responsible for maintaining your property's sanitary system up to the point it joins our wastewater network. We are responsible for everything beyond that.

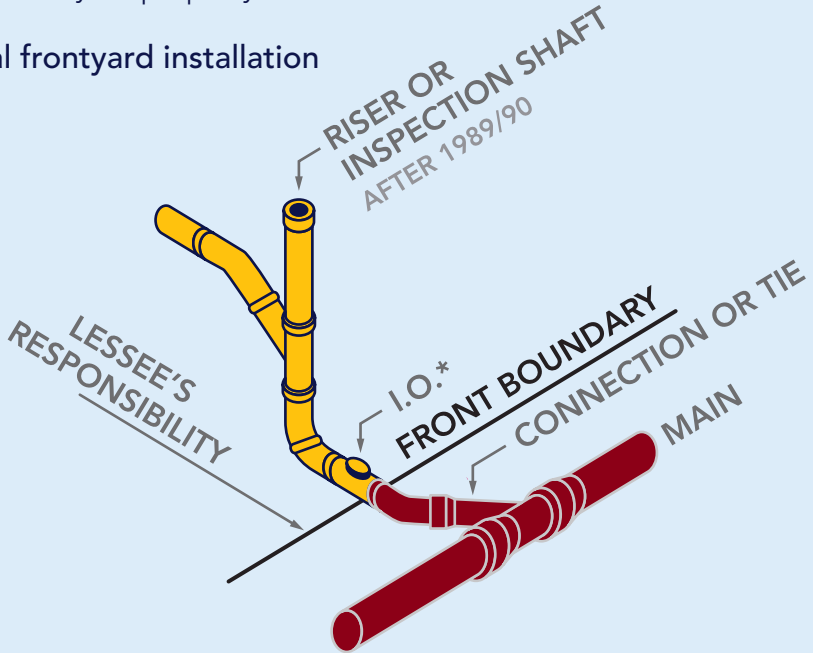
The border between our network and your sanitary system is usually at the property boundary. Typically, this is downstream of the last Inspection Opening (I.O.) as shown below.

In the absence of an I.O., the border is determined by the approved drainage plan. Approved sanitary drainage plans are the property of the ACT Government and can be found under Access Canberra's plumbing tie search.

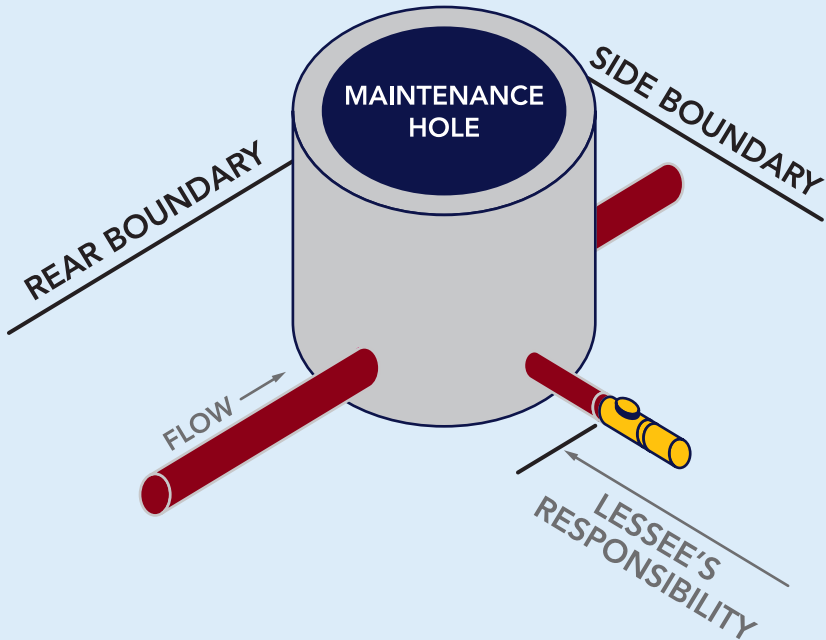


The following diagrams show the types of drainage installations your property could have.

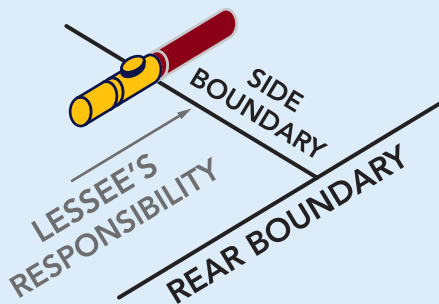
### Typical frontyard installation



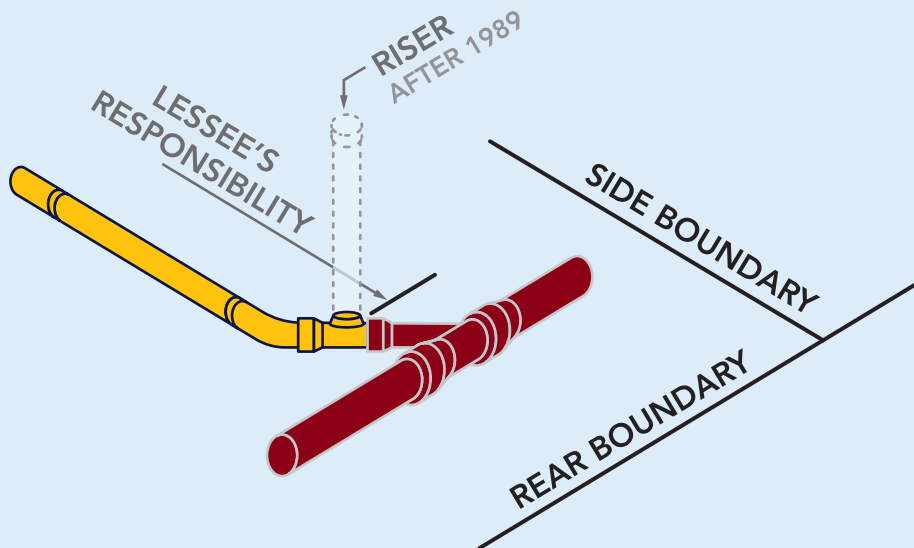
### Connection directly into the maintenance hole



## Typical backyard installation



## Deep connection



### Legend:

I.O.\* = INSPECTION OPENING

 = LESSEE'S RESPONSIBILITY

 = ICON WATER'S RESPONSIBILITY

# Your responsibilities

You are responsible for:

- Maintaining your internal sanitary drainage in accordance with Australian Standards.
- Ensuring all blockages, or repairs, to your plumbing is performed by a licenced plumber.
- Preventing blockages by only using the wastewater network to dispose of domestic human waste. For more information about this, please visit [iconwater.com.au/draincare](https://www.iconwater.com.au/draincare).
- Allowing a one (1) metre clearance zone around access maintenance chambers and inspection shafts, also known as risers. For more information about this, please visit [iconwater.com.au/my-home/assets-around-my-home](https://www.iconwater.com.au/my-home/assets-around-my-home)
- Maintaining access to critical infrastructure which may traverse your land so our crews can perform essential maintenance where necessary.



**Maintenance hole**



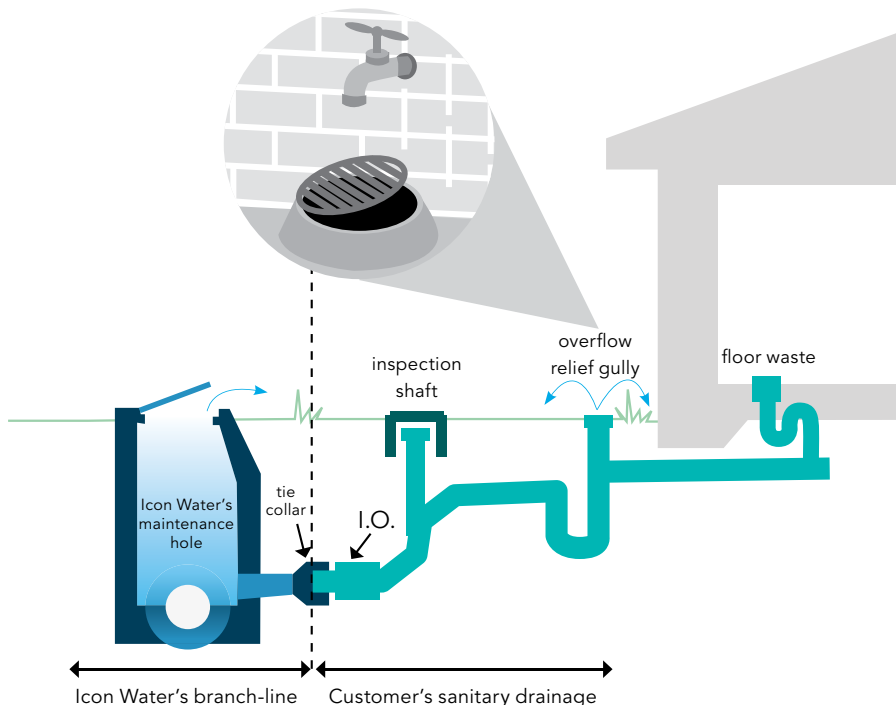
**Riser or  
inspection shaft**

## Maintaining your sanitary system - overflow relief gullies (ORG)

ORGs are an essential part of your sanitary system. They provide a point of release that prevents wastewater from overflowing into your home if a blockage occurs downstream (on our side of the network).

ORGs are often obstructed, glued in place or the ground level has been altered to accommodate landscaping, paving or the installation of decks. They are often incorrectly used to drain stormwater. These modifications compromise the effectiveness of your sanitary system and increases the risk of wastewater entering your home.

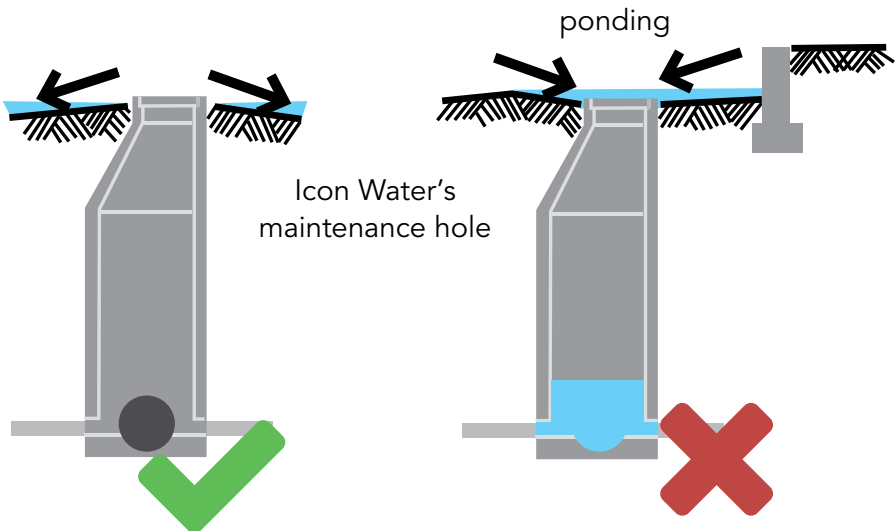
Your ORG must be 150mm below the lowest internal fixture outlet or floor waste and free from obstruction to operate properly. Your insurer may not honour a claim if your sanitary system isn't compliant with Australian Standards.



# Preventing blockages and stormwater from disrupting the network

To help prevent serious blockages both to your sanitary system and the public network, it is important to:

- Avoid planting trees or shrubs with invasive roots near wastewater assets.
- Apply the canopy principle: 'What grows above ground, reflects the growth below ground'. Consult your local nursery for more information.
- Mitigate any stormwater or surface water pooling/ponding over any ORGs, inspection shafts or maintenance holes on your property.
- **Don't connect** any stormwater sumps, drains or downpipes to the wastewater network.
- Ensure any change to ground levels, as a result of cutting/filling land, does not result in stormwater run-off or ponding around surface fittings (see below).
- Correctly dispose of household waste.





Our wastewater network is only designed to manage domestic human waste. So, what do we do with other bits of household waste and rubbish?

For some things, like wet wipes and sanitary products, the answer is clear – straight in the bin! See our waste disposal guide below for information about other kinds of waste.

## Waste disposal guide



### Domestic Cooking Oil / grease

Pour cooled oil in a bottle and wrap grease in paper.

Place both in the bin.



### Pads, tampons, nappies, condoms, baby wipes and wet wipes

Place in the bin.



### Food scraps

Place in the bin or compost.

For advice on how to dispose of hazardous waste appropriately visit [cityservices.act.gov.au](http://cityservices.act.gov.au) or call **Access Canberra** on **13 22 81**

#### Hazardous waste includes:

- household cleaning products,
- aerosol sprays,
- automotive supplies (including motor oil),
- paints and thinners,
- batteries,
- photographic chemicals,
- gas bottles,
- e-waste,
- pool chemicals and pesticides.

# Blockages

The property owner is responsible for all repairs and maintenance to a household's sanitary system, including any fault or root intrusion located at the designated connection point.

You may have a blockage if you're experiencing any of the following:

- Toilets, basins, baths or tubs are slow to empty.
- Toilets overflow or fill higher than usual.
- ORGs/disconnector traps overflow when toilets are flushed or when baths/basins are released.

If you have a blockage your first call should always be to a licensed plumber. If the plumber believes the blockage is in our side of the network, please give us a call on **(02) 6248 3111** so one of our teams can be dispatched to fix the issue. If the blockage is confirmed to be within the Icon Water Network a claim for reimbursement of the plumbers charges can be submitted to Icon Water for consideration.

For more information on how to claim for a reimbursement visit [iconwater.com.au/My-Home/Claims/plumbing-reimbursement](http://iconwater.com.au/My-Home/Claims/plumbing-reimbursement).



Result of customer blockage



Build up and clogging of pipes



Wipes clumped in a concrete pipe



Icon Water worker removing blockage by hand

**Please note** that no reimbursement will be provided if:

- A plumber, or other non-authorised person, removes/relieves a blockage in our side of the network.
- The blockage is caused by unapproved waste entering the network from a household (all related charges will be borne by the property owner).

Call out and repair costs resulting from a failure to comply with our discharge rules can be passed on to the property owner.

Visit [iconwater.com.au/draincare](https://iconwater.com.au/draincare) for more information.

If you notice a wastewater overflow from a maintenance hole, please contact us immediately on **(02) 6248 3111**.

## We're always happy to help

For general queries, you can contact us directly at [talktous@iconwater.com.au](mailto:talktous@iconwater.com.au)

If you need a bit more assistance, or just prefer talking to a person, you can call us on **(02) 6248 3111**.

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