



## Flooding and fencing



# Addressing fences that block overland flow paths

Solid fences can block overland flow paths and trap stormwater creating a dam that can lead to flooding and damage to you and your neighbour's property. As trapped stormwater rises, the danger of the fence collapsing increases creating an even greater risk of damage and flash flooding.

It's important to deal with fences that block overland flow paths. If you have a solid fence on an overland flow path, there are ways to help water flow freely while keeping your fence.

### What is an overland flow path?

Overland flow paths are the natural course water takes across land. These paths are an important part of the stormwater system as during heavy rain they help water flow away when the piped network reaches capacity, and they can become temporary fast-flowing streams.

*Before building, altering, or replacing a fence we recommend getting advice from a qualified professional and checking building and resource consent requirements. If your fence is on a shared boundary, it's important to communicate with your neighbour and agree a way forward. If an agreement can't be reached, you may need to address the matter under the Fencing Act 1978.*

For wood fences:

- Remove bottom horizontal palings.
- Cut vertical palings to a minimum of 150mm from the ground.
- Use wide-gauge wire mesh or similar at the bottom of the fence to keep pets in – materials must allow water to flow through and be cleared of any debris that could cause a blockage.



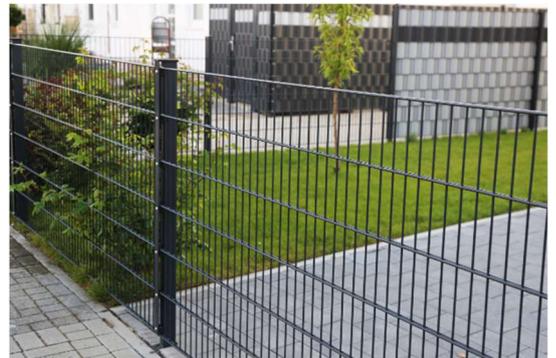
### For concrete, steel or rock fences:

- Drill multiple drainage holes along the base to prevent water pooling and flooding.
- Create a gravel trench at the base of the fence for water drainage.



### General tips:

- Use permeable backfill material for fence repairs or replacements.
- Introduce deep-rooted plants to absorb excess water.
- Consider installing a drainage system or terracing with professional advice and consent.
- Consider other types of permeable fencing such as pool fencing or post and wire / mesh fencing.



### What does permeable mean?

Permeable means a material that allows water to pass through it, like a sponge soaking up water instead of letting it pool on the surface.

If you rent your property, speak to your property manager or the owner about these options.

### Compliance and safety:

Diverting, changing or blocking an overland flow path, for example by erecting a shed or fence, generally requires resource consent. To ensure compliance and safety, always consult council's planning and building regulations and seek advice from a qualified professional or the council's consents team before starting your project.

Remember, while you are allowed to redirect stormwater on your own property, you must not change how it exits your property in a way that affects neighbouring properties. Water must follow its natural path when it leaves your property, and each property owner is responsible for managing the impacts of stormwater within their own boundaries.

Visit [www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/floodviewer](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/floodviewer) or scan the code below for more information about flood hazards and how to get prepared.



### Need help?



Visit: [aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

Enquire: [aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/contactus](http://aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/contactus)



Phone: 09 301 0101



Write: Auckland Council, Private Bag 92300  
Victoria Street West, Auckland 1142 | DX CX 10032