

# Managing private property stormwater drains

Auckland is prone to unexpected and intense rainfall causing significant amounts of surface water that can build to a potentially destructive flood. The best way to help prevent this is through drainage and managing the flow of surface water across land, known as overland flow paths.

The council is responsible for managing public drainage and roads as well as maintaining and building the large public stormwater drainage network that serves the region. However, looking after the drainage on your property is your responsibility. Taking care of your drain pipes and ensuring overland flow paths are clear are just some of the things needed to be done.

Most private drains connect to the public stormwater network and are important because they carry stormwater away from homes and businesses to the public network, streams and the sea. Any chemicals, oils, soaps or dirt that enter the drains are potentially harmful to the environment.

## Here's what you can do:

### Keep drains clear

Keep drains – both the pipes underground and the open drains on the surface – clear of blockages caused by litter, leaves, sticks and other objects.

**Tip** - Tree roots sometimes damage and block underground pipes, so avoid planting trees close to these pipes as removing roots and repairing the damage can be expensive.

### Find your flow

Shape the land so that water drains away from buildings allowing it to be collected by a drain at the lowest point. Keep the area free of blockages.

### Soak it up

Make sure you have lawn, borders or land that can naturally soak up and hold on to rain water. Surfaces such as concrete or paving will prevent water draining away which increases the amount of surface water and risk of flooding. Some forms of paving are permeable and using them can make a significant difference to a property's drainage.

**Tip** - Ensure that lawns have a thick enough layer of top soil to help prevent them deteriorating in heavy rain.

### Good neighbours

Remember your neighbours. If you make alterations to your own land this may change the overland flow and cause water to flow into your neighbour's property. For example, if you decide to concrete your driveway this reduces the area for the rain to soak in to and may increase flow into your neighbour's property.

It is easier for neighbours to share resources and fix things together.

### For more information

If you have problems with your drainage then your first call should be to a plumber or a drainage contractor. The Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board is a useful place to find a contractor, go to [www.pgdb.co.nz](http://www.pgdb.co.nz) to find one in your area. If you think that you have a problem regarding overland flow, then a landscaping contractor or engineer will be able to advise you.

Before starting a development that may affect flow paths on your land please consult Auckland Council by calling 09 301 0101. Talking to us at the start can avoid costly problems later.

Resources are available on our website: [www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) key word 'stormwater'.

► **Find out more:** phone 09 301 0101  
or visit [www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)