

**To: The Owner/Occupier and/or Builder**

## **Private sewers: the law is changing**

The majority of drains and sewer pipes which run underneath your garden, driveway, and even nearby pavements and roads, are often your responsibility, not the water company's.

But from 1 October 2011 the sections of sewers and pipes you share with your neighbours and pipes outside your property boundary which connect to the existing sewer network will change to become the responsibility of Anglian Water. All water and waste water companies, including Anglian Water, were required to notify their customers of the legal changes ahead of this transfer date.

This new legislation is designed to address problems with the current fragmented ownership system – by putting more of the responsibility for looking after drains and sewer pipes on the water companies, and less on you.

The new legislation will affect different types of property in different ways and you can find out more about how the new rules will apply to your home or business by visiting;  
**[www.anglianwater.co.uk](http://www.anglianwater.co.uk)**

### **Q. What do you need to do?**

**A.** If you are intending to build an extension at ground floor which will cover, or be near to a private sewer/manhole, i.e. a foul water drain serving more than one property, you should get an accurate and thorough survey to determine the layout and depth of the drains on your property before starting building works.

**Q. I am planning to build an extension and I think there is a private sewer crossing my land. What should I do?**

**A.** Building owners and/or the contractor are advised to view Anglian Water's web site at; [www.anglianwater.co.uk/developers/sewer-connection/build-over.aspx](http://www.anglianwater.co.uk/developers/sewer-connection/build-over.aspx) to consider whether the proposals will receive automatic approval by complying with their standard set of criteria. Formal consent will be required in all other cases if the proposed building work is over or within 3m of the private sewer.

**Q. How will this affect my Building Regulation application?**

**A.** The Private Sewers Transfer Regulations does not amend the Building Regulations in any way and there is no obligation for Building Control to consult with Anglian Water, unless the drain or sewer is shown on the map of sewers, in accordance with the current requirements of Building Regulation H4. However, we do have duty of care to our 'customers' and Anglian Water have asked to be consulted if the proposal does not comply with all of the standard criteria.

When you make your Building Regulation application, you should consult Anglian Water regarding any proposals to build over or within 3m of the private sewer. We do however strongly recommend that you contact Anglian Water before this time, so that you can discuss and agree what works are acceptable within the vicinity of the private sewer.

**Q. When can I start my building works?**

**A.** Once you have contacted Anglian Water to discuss their requirements / consent and made a Building Regulation application you can start building works. Please note that you may also require Planning Permission.

## **Q. What about Exempt Buildings**

**A.** Exempt buildings are still exempt, but they still need to be assessed against Anglian Waters standard build over / near criteria. All building owners will have been notified by Anglian Water about the change of legislation and their obligations.

**Please remember that you do have a duty of care not to damage or restrict access to the private sewer.**

You should contact Anglian Water where the following criteria apply to your building project;

- you are building over a manhole / access point on a private sewer pipe(s) that is shared with a neighbour
- you are building over more than 6m of a private sewer pipe(s) that is shared with a neighbour
- you are building over a private sewer pipe shared with your neighbour that is 150mm diameter or more
- you are building over a private sewer pipe shared with your neighbour that is 3m deep or more
- The foundation design allows loading on a private sewer pipe that is shared with your neighbour.

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By email: **developerservices-wwsupporteast@anglianwater.co.uk**

By phone: **01206 289470**

Website: **www.anglianwater.co.uk**

**If you would like this information in large print, Braille or another language, please contact 01702 318111.**



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