

# **Managing streams and open drains on private property**

Your responsibilities





## Managing streams and open drains

Council is responsible for the piped stormwater network and associated infrastructure; maintaining the network involves regular inspections and maintenance to ensure that the network works as it should. However as a homeowner you are responsible for maintaining streams and open drain that pass through your property. Regular maintenance of the stream and its banks or open drains not only keeps the waterway and aquatic life healthy but can also protect your property by helping reduce any potential flood risk. It is vital that waterways are kept clear and this is an ongoing joint effort between you and your council.

## What is the risk?

During heavy rain events the volume of water flowing through streams and open drains increases. If the flow of water is obstructed then flooding may occur.

Flooding not only increases the risk of damage to your property but also the land around your property as this may become unstable and results in subsidence.

## What can you do to protect yourself?

- Remove any debris, overhanging branches, fallen trees or vegetation and clear away any bank collapses to ensure water can flow freely.
- Make sure any pollutants on your property cannot find their way into the stream or open drain. This is particularly important during heavy rain events.
- Any private structure that crosses the stream or open drain needs to be fixed securely to stop it breaking free and floating away during increased water flow.
- The natural route that water runs off your land is the "overland flow path". Landscaping, buildings, sealed driveways and pathways all affect the flow of water through your property. Water courses are best left open allowing water to flow freely.
- Please contact us if you are considering piping a water course on your property as we are more than happy to discuss this with you. However, this may not be permitted in some areas.
- Obtain sandbags and store them ready for use. Sandbags placed in strategic areas can help reduce potential flood risk.
- Regularly check your local weather information via MetService and social media to be aware of any weather events that may affect water courses on your property. Pay particular attention to heavy, localised rain events. These are typically short, intense events that have the potential to result in flooding.





**Let's all do our part to  
protect our waterways.**

**Wellington Water**

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