Uriarra pressure sewerage system

Household guide and operating instructions

ActewAGL

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About the system

The sewerage system that serves the Uriarra village is comprised of two parts – your household sanitary drains and ACTEW Corporation's pressurised sewerage system. A drawing of the pressure sewerage system can be found on pages 8 and 9.

ActewAGL operates, maintains and repairs ACTEW's pressurised sewerage system. The pump pod, its contents and the pipe connecting the pump pod to the utility sewer network, including the boundary kit, are the property of ACTEW and should not be accessed by any parties other than ActewAGL or ActewAGL-approved contractors.

The property owner and/or occupants are responsible for maintaining and repairing the sanitary drains that carry domestic wastewater into ACTEW's pod. If a problem occurs in the sanitary drains a licensed drainer will need to be called. These assets are marked in blue on the diagram on pages 8 and 9.

Important safety information

Electric eels are tools commonly used by plumbers to clean blocked drains. They should not be used in the inspection shaft. If an electric eel is used in household sanitary drains, a barrier must be inserted in to the inspection shaft to prevent the eel from entering into the pod chamber and possibly causing electrocution.

What to do if the ActewAGL control panel alarm sounds

An audible alarm and a flashing red light will turn on if the pump fails to operate. When the alarm sounds the occupant should take the following steps.

Button to silence the audible alarm.

Step 1 – turn off the audible alarm

The audible alarm can be silenced by pushing the silencing button on the underside of the alarm panel, as shown in the picture to the left. This panel is mounted on the wall of the house, shed, garage or a stand alone post.

The alarm light cannot be turned off by occupants. ActewAGL will turn it off when repairs are completed and the pod is operating normally.

Step 2 – assess whether there has been a power failure

If a village-wide power failure occurs, the control panel alarm may sound after the power is restored because the pod has filled during the power failure. All the pods in the village will need to empty, this will happen automatically and may take some time. If the alarm persists for more than one hour call ActewAGL and report the problem.

Step 3 – report the alarm to ActewAGL

Before contacting ActewAGL, please check the following.

- Is there any wastewater coming from the ground, particularly between the pump pit and boundary kit?
- Are there any wastewater odours around the home?
- Has there been a power failure? If so, it is suggested that you wait one hour before calling ActewAGL.
- Is the pump making any unusual noises?

After checking the above, phone ActewAGL's 24 hour faults and emergency line on 13 11 93 and report findings to the operator.

When speaking to the ActewAGL operator, it is important to indicate if there are signs of a blockage, such as slow releasing toilets, gurgling drains or wastewater overflowing from grates. If the property is being damaged by overflowing wastewater from the pod or boundary kit, ActewAGL will attend as soon as possible. Should a household experience overflow from internal sanitary fixtures or an external overflow relief gully it is recommended that the customer contact a licensed drainer in the first instance.

The pod is designed with extra capacity should the pump fail. Therefore, in most circumstances, there is enough capacity to collect a moderate volume of night time waste.

ActewAGL prefer to carry out repairs during the day to minimise neighbourhood disturbance from maintenance trucks and field crews.

Step 4 – minimise wastewater generation until the pump is repaired

In the period between when the alarm sounds and the pump is repaired, an effort should be made to minimise the volume of wastewater being generated. This can be done in the following manner.

- Do not turn on any clothes washing machines or dishwashers while the alarm is active.
- Keep showers very brief.
- Where the occupant takes a bath, leave the plug in until after the alarm has been cancelled or use a bucket to empty the water out onto the garden.

- Switch off automated drainage from swimming pools or spas until the unit has been repaired.
- Practice water-saving techniques and do not leave taps running.

Step 5 – ensure the ActewAGL field crews have access to the pod

ActewAGL requires unobstructed access to the pod so that vehicles and trailers can enter the yard and park as close to the pod as possible. An unobstructed, smooth, all weather access path without steps is required to permit ActewAGL to wheel a pump lifting trolley between the pod and vehicle. In addition, please undertake the following steps.

- Ensure that property gates are unlocked.
- Ensure that the driveway or pathway leading to the pod is clear to allow access.
- Provide a one metre clear space around the pod, boundary kit, alarm panel and power supply for ActewAGL to safely work on these assets.
- Lock-up any pets that might escape from the property or pose a threat to ActewAGL crews.
- Ensure the lid of the pod is visible and clear of any obstacles, such as mulch or pot plants.

Step 6 – confirm the pumping unit is repaired before reverting to normal water use

After faults have been rectified, the ActewAGL field crew will inform the occupant that all repairs have been carried out.

If occupants have been away from the property they need to check that the alarm warning light is no longer operating before returning to normal water-use practices.

What to do if there is a burst pipe

The pipeline from the pod to ACTEW's sewer network is:

- flexible and made from Class 16 polyethylene
- black in colour with a cream stripe
- buried at a minimum depth of 300 millimetres (mm) below natural ground level
- under pressure just like a water pipe.

The most common cause of breakage is accidental damage caused by excavation tools or equipment. It is important to accurately locate and mark the route of the pipe before occupants or contractors commence any digging. Contact Dial Before You Dig on 1100 to find out the location of utility assets on the property.

The property owner may be required to pay ActewAGL callout and repair costs that result from damage to ACTEW assets.

If a pressurised sewerage pipe has burst, take the following steps.

Step 1 – assess whether the broken pipe is discharging wastewater (sewage), ACTEW's non-potable water or rainwater from the on-site rainwater tank

The information below may assist you in this process.

- Wastewater has an odour.
- ACTEW non-potable water and rain water are generally odourless.
- Wastewater pipes are a black colour, rainwater water pipes are marked RW and ACTEW non-potable water pipes are purple.
- If the discharge is pulsing, it is likely to be from a pumped sewerage pod or pressurised sewer network. If the stream is constant it is more likely to be from a burst water pipe.
- Turn off the household water at the isolation valve next to the water meter and turn off the rain water pump to see if they stop the leak.
- If a water pipe has broken inside the boundaries of the property call a licensed plumber.

Step 2 – isolate power supply to the sewer pump

If the problem is a broken pressure sewer pipe, turn off the power to the pod pump at the household switchboard. These pumps have a separate circuit and will not affect power to the rest of the house.

Step 3 – report the broken sewerage pipe

Report the broken pipe to ActewAGL by calling 13 11 93 and tell them that the pumps have been switched off.

Step 4 – minimise household water use

Minimise the amount of wastewater discharged into the sewerage system until repairs are carried out. See step 4 on page 3 for more information.

Step 5 – after the system is fixed

Once ActewAGL has completed repairs to the system, the alarm light will be turned off and normal operation can resume.

Going on holidays

Before going on holidays or when no one will be at home for more than three consecutive days the pod should be flushed with clean water just before the occupant leaves. This will prevent any wastewater becoming septic or generating unwanted odours.

To flush the system the occupant should run clean water into a sink until the pump can be heard operating for about 30 seconds. Half-filling a bathtub and discharging it will achieve the same result.

Do not turn off the power to the pod when turning off the power to the rest of the house. This is in case there are any leaking taps or fixtures, which might fill the pod.

If the occupant fails to flush the pod before going on holidays and ActewAGL has to attend in response to complaints from surrounding neighbours, ActewAGL may invoice the property owner for the costs of attendance and any associated works.

Considering undertaking work on your block?

Before planning to build anything from a new house to an extension, pergola, excavation or any other landscaping feature, check what ActewAGL infrastructure is on and around the property. Contact Dial Before You Dig by calling 1100 or visit **www.1100.com.au**

For more information visit **actewagl.com.au/Help-and-advice/Safety-advice**

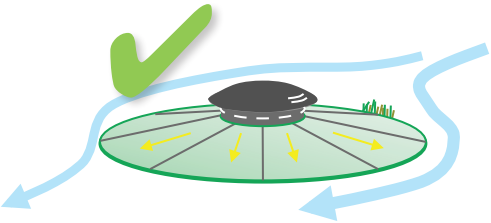
Complete the following steps before starting work.

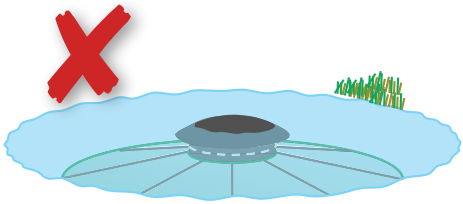
- Ensure the pod and boundary kit will not be permanently buried or temporarily covered with any structure, concrete, soil, tanbark, pot plants or other garden material.
- Ensure surface stormwater does not flood, pond or stream around the pod and its access hatch. The pod ventilation slots located just under the outside lip of the pod's access hatch must be at least 75mm clear of the surrounding surface – whether it is grass, earth, gravel, mulch or paving. The surrounding surface must fall away from all sides of the hatch to ensure surface water from storms, rain or irrigation cannot lap against the sides of the pod.
- A failure to comply with this requirement may interrupt the operation of the Uriarra Village sewage treatment plant.
- Provide a one metre clear space around the pod, boundary kit, alarm panel, power supply conduit and power board so that ActewAGL can safely work on these assets.
- Ensure that the driveway or pathway leading to the pod is unobstructed. ActewAGL may pass on to the landholder any costs associated with locating and exposing the pod or boundary kit.

Building approval may be required for any alterations or additions, including landscaping. For more information visit the building and renovation page on the ActewAGL websit at **actewagl.com.au/Product-and-services/Building-and-renovation**

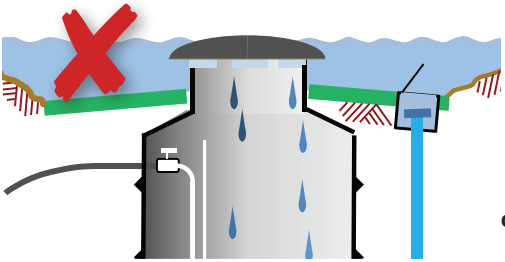
Approvals may also be required from other authorities and service providers, such as ACT Environment and Sustainable Development.

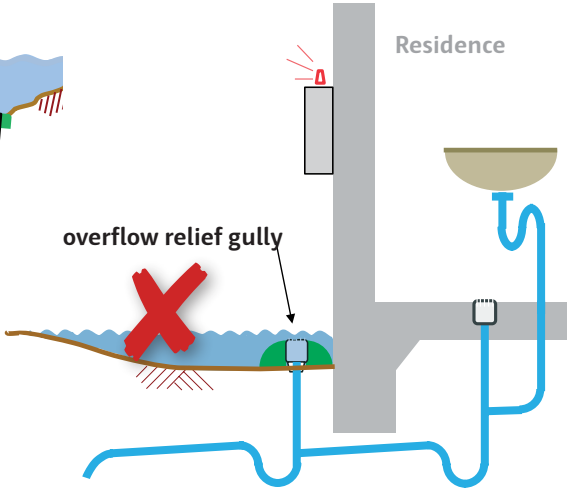
To prevent damage to the pressure sewerage system occupants must ensure that surface water does not pond over or flood into pod ventilation slots, the overflow relief gully or boundary kit.





To prevent rainwater from entering the sewerage system the finished surface level must be graded to fall away and prevent pooling around the pod, boundary kit and inspection shaft.

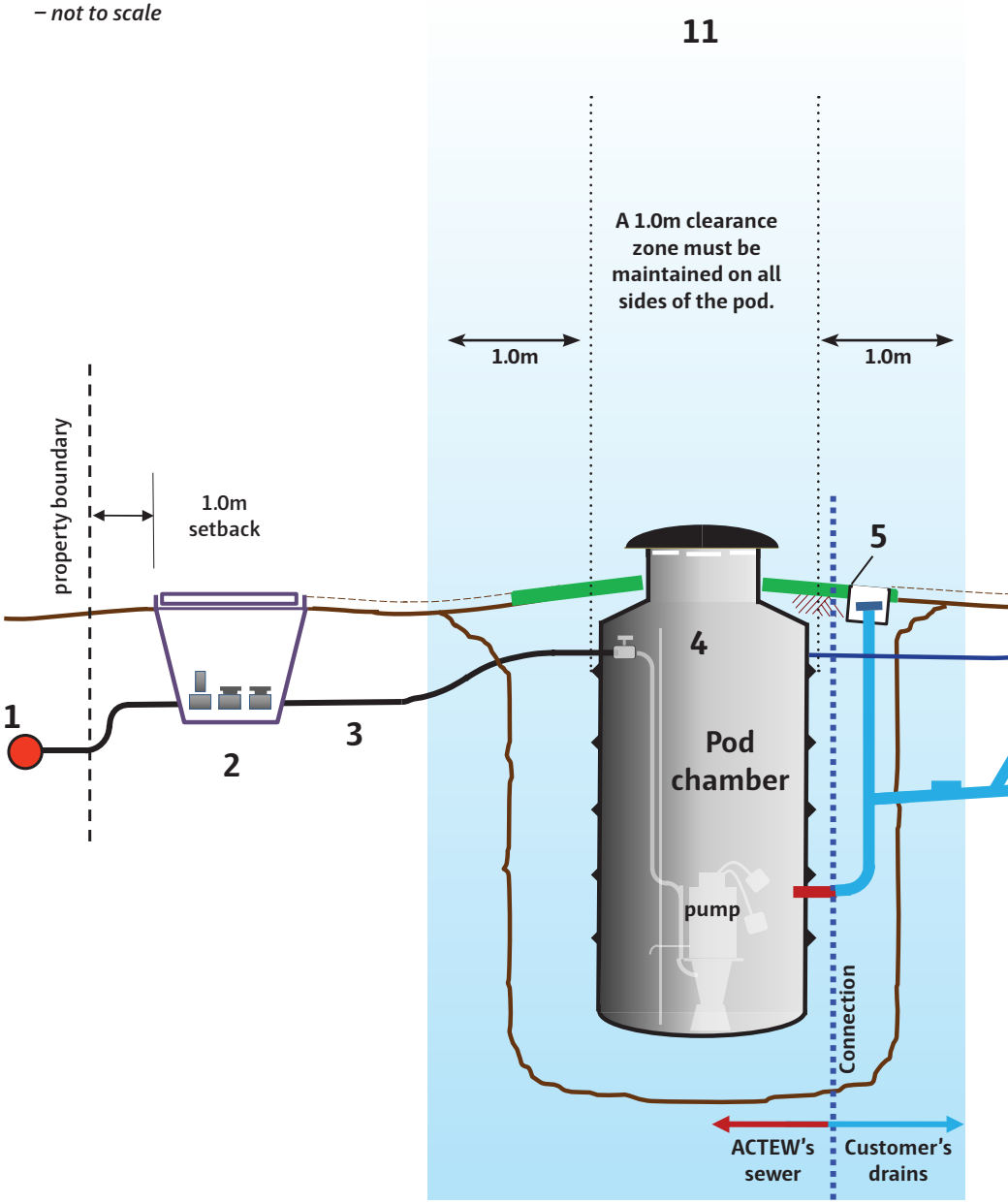


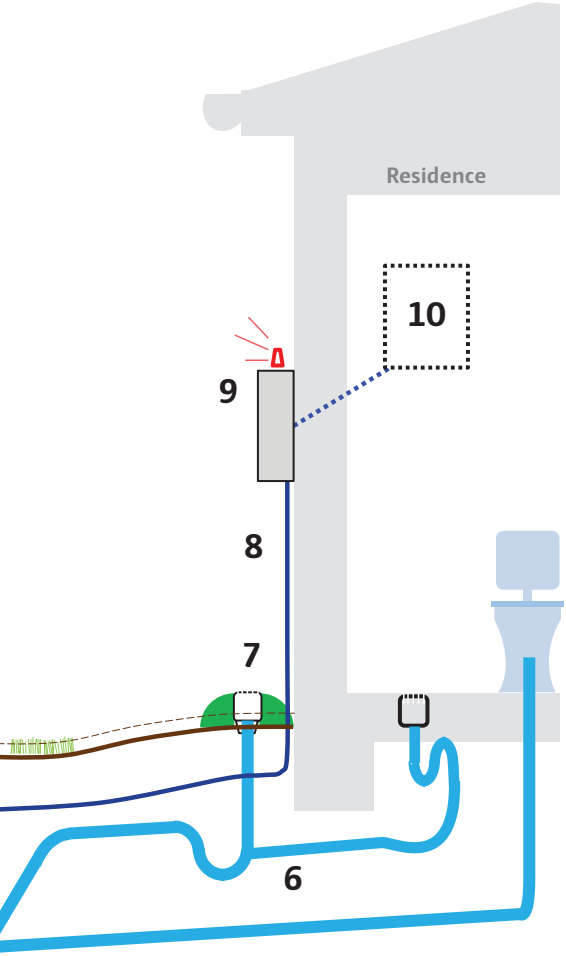


It is extremely important that surface water does not pond over or flood into the pod ventilation slots or overflow relief gully.

Pressure sewerage system diagram

– not to scale





Legend

1. ACTEW pressure reticulation sewer network.
2. ACTEW boundary connection kit.
3. ACTEW property discharge tube.
4. ACTEW pressure sewer pump pod chamber.
5. Inspection shaft with protective -lid. Licenced plumbers should not attempt to clear any blockage from this point. If a blockage is visable occupants should contact ActewAGL.
6. Customer's sanitary drain.
7. Overflow relief gully not less than 150mm below floor level and 75mm above finished ground level, in an area not subject to flooding.
8. Power and alarm conduit(s).
9. ACTEW control panel and alarm.
10. Customer's electricity switch board.

11 Pod protection envelope – an obstruction-free zone extending from the underside of the pod to an unlimited height above the pod.

Swimming pools and spas

Due to the unique nature of the sewerage network servicing Uriarra Village special conditions apply to the installation of swimming pools and spas.

- Salt treated pools or spas will not be permitted. ActewAGL reserves the right to test water without notification.
- A separate holding tank and pump to control the rate and timing of pool or spa discharge into the pod must be installed by and at cost to the property owner. The design must be approved in writing by ActewAGL. ActewAGL is the only approved party to complete the connection of additional infrastructure to the existing ACTEW pod, which will also be completed at a cost to the property owner.
- The maximum flow rate for discharge will be dictated by ActewAGL, as will acceptable times for discharge. This will be based on the demands on the treatment plant.
- A *Trade Waste agreement* must be established before any pool can be drained into the sewerage system. This is not necessary for normal backwashing operations. The agreement will include any other requirements that ActewAGL have in relation to discharge. For more information visit **actewagl.com.au/wastewater-source-management**

What can be discharged to the sewerage system?

To avoid blockages or damage to the ACTEW sewerage system, particularly the pump pit, only domestic sewage may be discharged into the sanitary drainage system.

Domestic sewage typically includes waste generated from the following activities:

- flushing the toilet – personal human waste and toilet paper only
- showering and bathing
- laundry washing
- cooking, excluding fats and solids
- dishwashing
- non-toxic household cleaning
- swimming pool backwash, including a reasonable volume of water used to clean filters, but not emptying the pool.

Non-domestic waste may cause damage to the ACTEW system and must not be discharged into saintary drains. The following list provides examples of materials that must not enter the ACTEW pod:

- stormwater from roofs, or the land surface
- rain water tank overflow
- gravel, sand or soil
- glass
- metal
- bones
- cooking fat
- fabric or clothing
- plastic
- pesticides
- nappies, baby wipes, sanitary napkins or tampons
- flammable materials
- pharmaceuticals or medications
- strong chemicals
- large quantities of household chemicals, such as bleach and disinfectant
- paints and thinners
- petrol or diesel
- seafood shells
- aquarium gravel
- kitty litter
- explosives.

The property owner will be required to pay ActewAGL any call-out and repair costs that result from a failure to comply with the above discharge rules.

Further information

For further information regarding the Uriarra sewerage system please call ActewAGL on **6248 3555** between 8.30am and 5.00pm. If there is a fault or emergency call **13 11 93**.

actewagl.com.au

Customer enquiries

13 14 93 – electricity, water, sewerage
13 18 86 – natural gas

Technical enquiries
6248 3555 – 8.30am to 5.00pm weekdays

Plumbing reimbursement claims
6248 3555 – 8.30am to 5.00pm weekdays
PlumberReimbursements@actewagl.com.au

Dial-Before-You-Dig
1100

Emergencies and faults

13 10 93 – electricity
13 11 93 – water, sewerage and stormwater
13 19 09 – natural gas
24 hours

Postal address

ActewAGL
GPO Box 366
Canberra ACT 2601

Language assistance

如果您需要幫助，請打電話給下面的號碼。

¿Necesita un intérprete? Llame al número indicado abajo.

هل تحتاج إلى مترجم؟ اتصل بالرقم أدناه.

Trebate li pomoć tumača? Nazovite niže navedeni broj.

Nếu quí vị cần sự giúp đỡ, vui lòng gọi số bên dưới.

Se vi serve un interprete, telefonate al seguente numero.

Αν χρειάζεστε διερμηνέα, τηλεφωνείτε στον αριθμό παρακάτω.

13 14 50
24 hours

ActewAGL

ActewAGL Distribution ABN 76 670 568 688 a partnership of ACTEW Distribution limited. ABN 83 073 025 224 and Alinta GCA Pty Ltd ABN 24 008 552 663. ActewAGL Distribution operates the water and wastewater assets of ACTEW Corporation Ltd ABN 86 069 381 960.

CCA 0911/08