

Roles in preparing and managing flood risk



Due to the way flooding moves through the landscape and crosses boundaries of responsibility, many organisations have a role in preparing for and managing flood risk.

Who plays a role in preparing and managing flood risk?

Different organisations also have different roles and responsibilities in relation to flood management.

- Melbourne Water, councils, landowners, private and government organisations have a role in preparing for and managing flood risk.
- Melbourne Water have responsibilities regarding waterways and regional drainage systems.
- Councils have responsibility for roads and local drainage systems.
- Homeowners have responsibilities for stormwater drainage assets on their property, including maintenance of downpipes and drainage pipes that connect into councils drains in the street.

Responsibility for managing local drainage networks primarily falls under the *Local Government Act 2020*. This legislation mandates that councils manage infrastructure and services, which includes local drainage systems, to ensure effective stormwater management within their municipalities. Additionally, *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and relevant local planning schemes also play a role in setting guidelines for drainage management through planning and development controls.

As the floodplain manager for the Port Phillip and Westernport region, Melbourne Water undertakes flood modelling to identify land that could be affected by a flood with a 1% chance of occurring in any year.

Between two private properties however, landowners, developers, and body corporates are responsible for the drainage up to the Legal Point of Discharge, except if the drainage structure is within a drainage easement.

Councils are also responsible for nominating stormwater discharge points under the *Building Regulations, 2018*. This ensures that stormwater is channelled in a way that reduces the risk of flooding and harm to the environment.¹



Cora Lyn (David Hannah)

¹ Communicating Flood risk to the Community, Melbourne Water

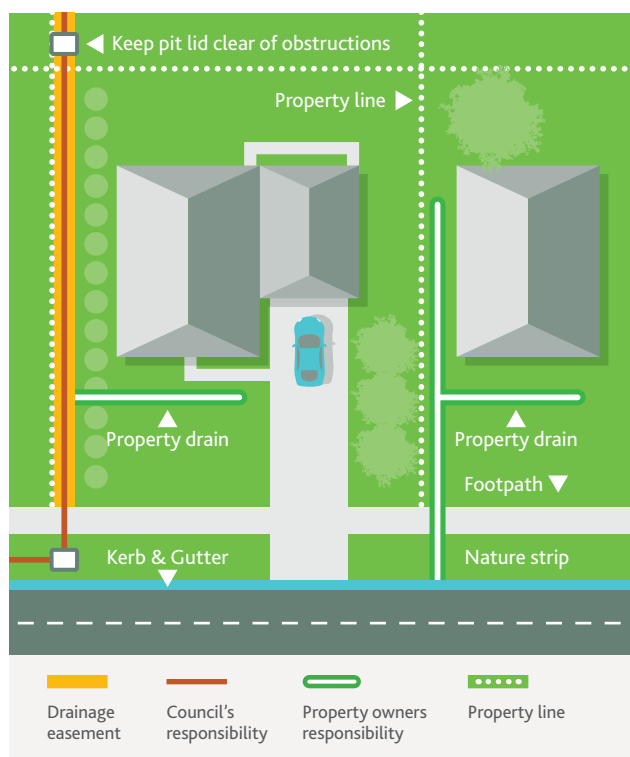
Melbourne Water and councils shared roles

Melbourne Water and councils have shared responsibilities when it comes to managing drainage systems in the event of a flood.

Under a convention established by the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works (Melbourne Waters' predecessor), Melbourne Water is generally responsible for the installation and maintenance of drainage systems and flood mitigation works for catchments

greater than 60 hectares, while councils are responsible for catchments smaller than 60 hectares. The drains associated with major roads are owned and maintained by VicRoads, while councils are responsible for the maintenance of local drainage assets within the road reserve of arterial roads. These responsibilities are described in the *Road Management Act, 2004*.²

Figure 1 - Flood resilient strategies



Who is responsible for the flooding incident?

- Internal drainage issues within private property - The property owner
- Stormwater outlet from property boundary to kerb and channel - The property owner
- Main drains - Melbourne Water
- Flooding of roads, footpaths, kerb and channel - Council

Related documents

- Getting it right on your building site
- Building stormwater code of practice
- Sediment control fact sheet

Related permits

- Temporary Discharge Permit (TDP)
- Legal Point of Discharge (LPD)
- Stormwater Connection
- Application for Drainage/Civil Approval



² *Inundation Overlays PSA – Roles and Responsibilities mitigating flood risk (2019)*, City of Melbourne

How individuals and businesses are responsible for flood preparedness

Individuals and businesses are responsible for understanding personal and local flood risks and being prepared for floods. This can include preparing an emergency kit, creating an evacuation plan, and taking steps to reduce the risk of flood damage, such

as elevating appliances and furniture. Individuals should stay informed about the flood risk in their area and follow any instructions from local authorities such as councils, police, and SES.

Figure 2 - Your flood emergency kit should include:



Figure 3 - Flood resilience strategies



1	Wetproofing	2	Dryproofing	3	Elevation	4	Absorption
							
Wet proofing involves using flood resilient materials and construction methods to allow flood waters to enter the house with a minimised chance of damage and moisture problems afterwards. By accepting a level of risk through wetproofing, and creating space for water to flow, you can be better prepared for any future flooding that may occur. This means going with the flow and working with water rather than against it.		Dry proofing involves sealing the exterior of your house to prevent water from entering. Flood doors are one of the options to do this. For low-level floods this is effective, however, greater depths can result in an increase in force on the building and result in cracking or movement of foundations. It's worth noting that this method can also displace more water onto neighbouring properties.		Raising the level of the house or its services above the projected flood level can be effective. Footings, posts, slabs and other structures all need to withstand an overland flow of water across the site. Services such as air conditioners, hot water units and electrical meter boards can be easily raised above the flood level to minimise the chance of important utilities failing.		It's also important to think about your property as a 'sponge' that can receive and slowly absorb water into ground surfaces. By increasing permeable surfaces on your property, you can decrease the amount of water flowing into your home, onto other properties and streets.	

Flood Resilient Guide to Retrofitting Your Home

<https://www.melbournewater.com.au/water-and-environment/flooding-advice/prepare-flooding>

How landowners, developers and body corporates are responsible for drainage

Landowners, developers, and body corporates are responsible for drainage up to the legal point of discharge, except if the drainage structure is within a drainage easement.

During the construction stage, an increase in sediments and other pollutants can significantly impact drainage systems if not well managed. Unmanaged construction activities can disturb the soil, leading to erosion and sedimentation in drainage networks.

This can reduce the capacity of drainage systems, obstruct water flow, and increase the risk of flooding. It is important for developers and contractors to implement effective sediment and erosion control measures during construction to mitigate these impacts.

Role of on site detention systems

On-site detention tanks and systems play a vital role in managing stormwater runoff and reducing the risk of flooding. These systems temporarily store excess rainwater during heavy rainfall events and release it slowly into the drainage network. Proper design, installation, and maintenance of on-site detention systems are essential to ensure their effectiveness.