

Homeowner drainage misconnections



**If any of the below apply
then this leaflet is for you:**

Are you building an extension or making home alterations?

Are you connecting a toilet/sink/shower/washing machine?

Are you changing your drainage connections?

Connecting to the wrong drain can lead to polluting your local environment.

What do you need to know to avoid misconnections?

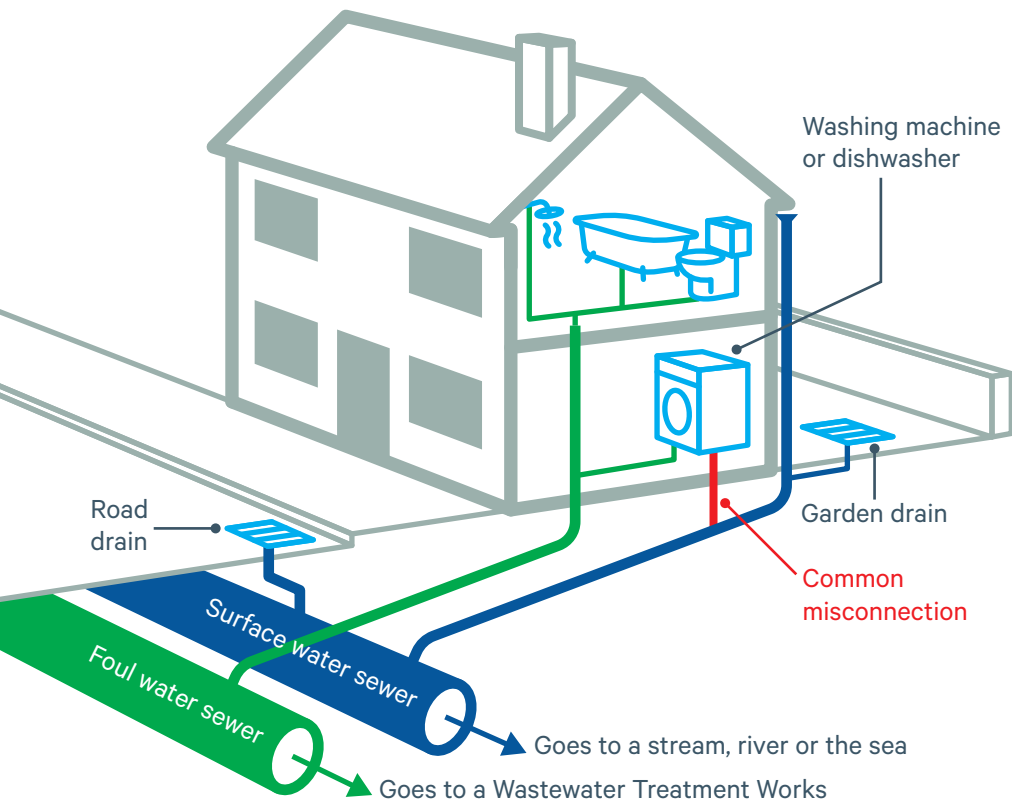
What is a misconnection?

A misconnection is where drainage from your home has been connected to the wrong part of the sewer or surface water network.

Types of misconnection

- 1 Foul water drainage** from toilets, sinks and washing machines etc. could be connected to the surface water (rain) system. This can pollute the local environment as these systems discharge to nearby streams, rivers or the sea.
- 2 OR surface water drainage** (from rain) could be connected to the foul water sewer system. This can overload the system causing flooding from manholes or premature discharges from storm overflows.

How a home should be connected



How do misconnections happen and what are my responsibilities?

Misconnections can occur when a property is first built or when home renovation work is done which require changes to or additional plumbing. The property owner is normally responsible for putting the misconnection right. The most common type of misconnection are appliances (washing machines and dishwashers) and sinks to outside surface water drains.

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, as the property owner, you are responsible for fixing any misconnections, even if they were there before you bought the property.

You could potentially face a fine of up to £50,000 if a misconnection is found and not fixed.

What is South West Water doing about misconnections?

We work closely with developers and offer support to plumbers and builders across the region to help them identify where our sewers are, and which one is the right one to connect to.

How can I avoid misconnecting?

CHECKLIST TO ASK YOUR BUILDER/PLUMBER:

- Are you installing a new toilet, sink or appliances?

(Foul/waste sewer connection)

- Are you connecting new surface drainage?

(Surface water system)

- Do you know the location of the sewer you want to connect to and where you want to connect to it?

Look for nearby manholes or at sewer records from your local authority and SWW for an indication of where you may connect

- Have you double checked you have the correct sewer?

- Foul water sewer
- Surface water sewer

- Do you know who owns the sewer?

You are responsible for the drains from your property up to the point they combine* with drains from a neighbouring property

- Are you connecting directly to a public sewer?

If so, do you have an approved SWW application to communicate (connect) with a public sewer form?

*For more information visit:

www.southwestwater.co.uk/services/your-wastewater/private-sewer-transfer/

Further useful info

If you believe you have a misconnection, need any further help or have any questions, contact us at:

0344 346 1010

Monday – Friday 8am – 6pm
Saturdays - 9am – 1pm

If you are planning on building, find more information here:

www.southwestwater.co.uk/developer-services/sewer-services-and-connections

Find more information about misconnections and what to do if you have a misconnection here:

www.connectright.org.uk/questions

