

SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT

Surface water: rainwater that runs off roofs and paved areas, and also water that drains to the public sewer from activities such as car washing.

NORTHUMBRIAN WATER	Responsible for managing the risks of flooding from foul or combined sewer systems draining from buildings and yards.
ENVIRONMENT AGENCY	Responsible for strategic overview of the management of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion and operational responsibility for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers, reservoirs, estuaries and the sea.
LOCAL AUTHORITY	Lead local flood authority. Responsible for developing, maintaining and applying a strategy for local flood risk management. Responsible for managing the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. Highway authorities: Responsible for providing and managing highway drainage and roadside ditches.

WHY IS MANAGING SURFACE WATER IMPORTANT?

To make sure that our network and treatment works can accommodate the growth planned for the region in the future we need to remove surface water flows from our system and prevent further surface water flows from being connected. It is important that applicants can demonstrate that the correct steps have been taken before being able to connect to our sewer system.

Much of the water that flows and is treated through our networks is rainwater runoff from hard surfaces. Many of our treatment facilities were originally designed only for foul sewage flows. To make sure we have enough space for future growth we need to remove the rainwater (surface water) where possible and avoid adding anymore.

Surface water runoff should be managed at the source wherever possible and disposed of in the following order: 1. To an infiltration or soak away system 2. To an open or closed watercourse 3. To a sewer.

Disposal to combined sewers should be the last resort once all other methods have been explored. If disposal to a sewer or combined sewer is the only option then we will be able to advise on suitable flow rates and connection points. Local Authorities may choose to restrict these rates further.

CONTROLLING CONNECTION POINTS AND RATES

When planning permission is granted there is a legal right to connect to the public sewer system. The implication for Northumbrian Water is that we must be able to influence development proposals within the required 21 days planning application consultation period in terms of: what connects (flows), where it connects (location) and when it connects (timescale). Should we not be able to influence the above through the planning process the potential implications could be sewer flooding and environmental pollution.

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