

altogether.

Homeowner's Guide

(Water)

Congratulations, you are connected to an environmentally friendly water system.

Welcome to our sustainable water community.

Your home is in a community that receives its water services from an independent Australian water utility, Altogether Group Pty Ltd (Altogether Group). Altogether provides homes with high quality water and wastewater services.

A feature of our services is the recycled water we provide.

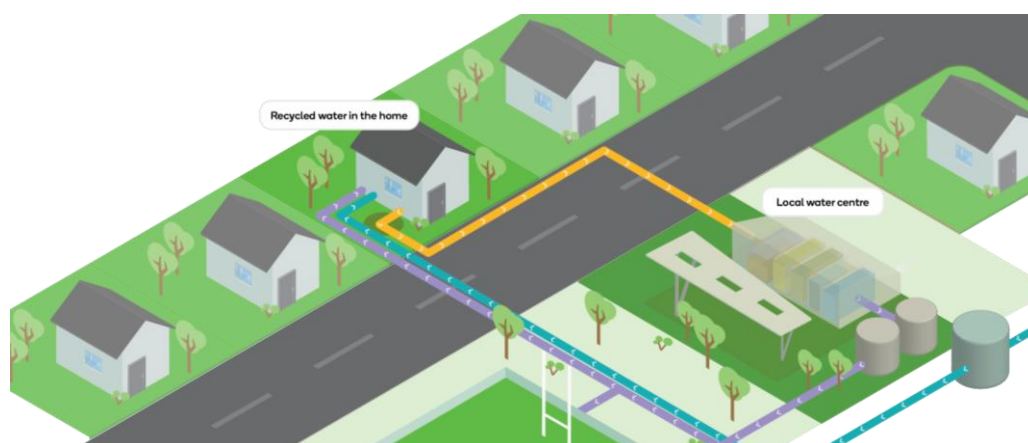
Altogether Group's recycled water can save homeowners up to 70 per cent of drinking water, reducing your water bill and helping drought proof your home.

This guide explains the operation and maintenance of Altogether's pressure sewer system installed on your property as well as the recycled water network. The system is easy to use but you are responsible for ensuring that nothing impacts how it works, so we recommend that you take a few minutes to familiarise yourself with the system.

There are some basic things that you should know about the pressure sewer system and how to use the recycled water connected to your home, these include:

- how it works
- maintenance and repairs
- your responsibilities

Thanks from the team at Altogether.



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1 We aim to help communities make the most of the water

1.1 Recycled water

Recycled water was first introduced to Sydney in the 1960s. Water recycling started with small irrigation projects and now produce billions of litres of recycled water each year. Recycled water is really just water. We take wastewater and put it through an eight-step purification process to remove impurities. The purified water is then supplied to homes and businesses, parks and playing fields.

Recycled water is a renewable and secure water source that protects you and your community from the effects of drought. Water restrictions do not apply to recycled water.

1.2 Pressure sewer network

Pressure sewer systems are an economical and an environmentally friendly way of collecting and transporting household wastewater.

Pressure sewer pipes are protected from flooding, as they are pressurised and not open to infiltration. This means there is no overflow into the environment at times of flood, as is commonly the case with gravity sewer networks.

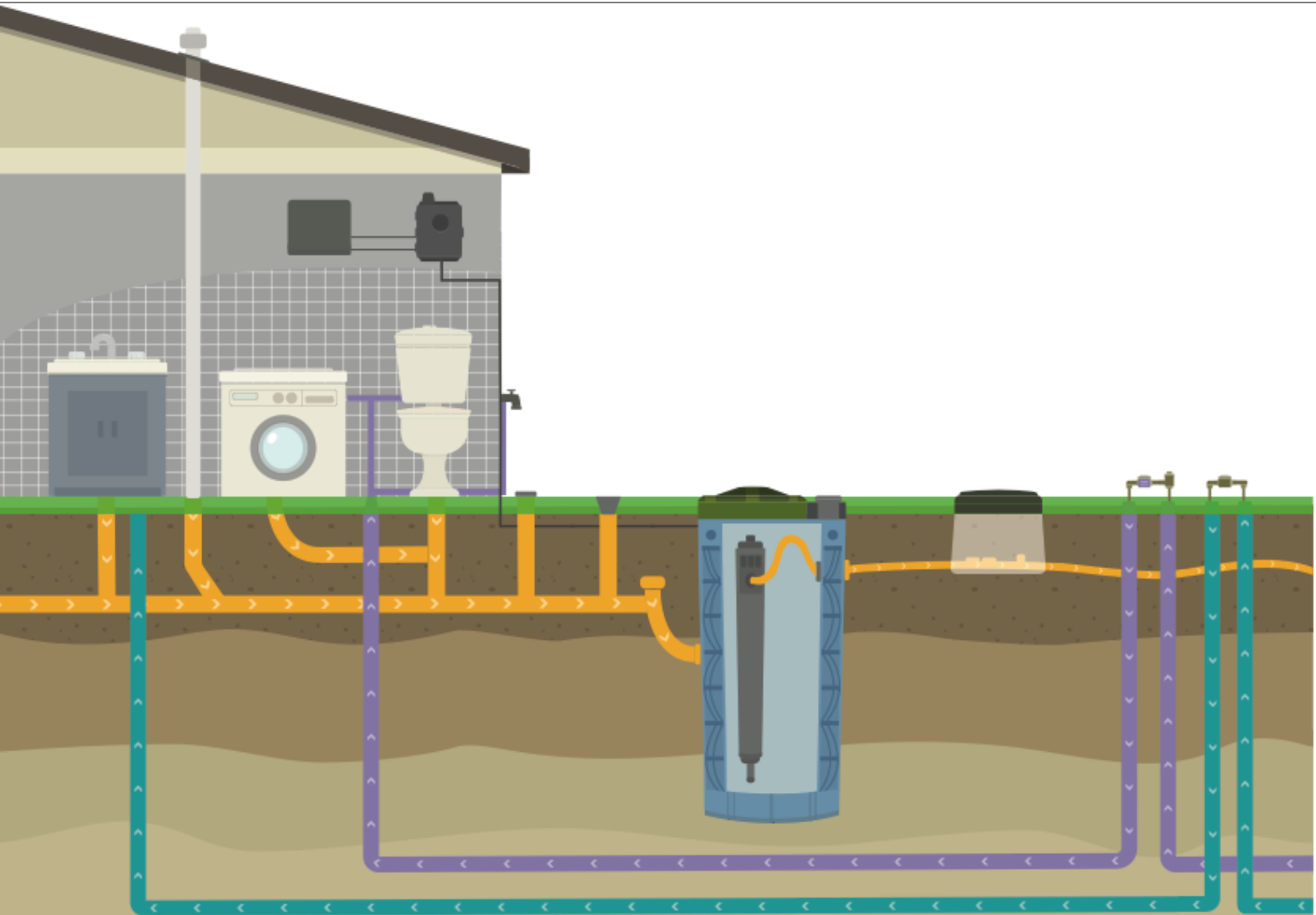
Our pressure sewer network has a smaller footprint which saves energy by reusing wastewater that would otherwise be pumped over long distances through extensive infrastructure and released in the water ways.

1.3 Drinking Water

Where we supply drinking water, we have an agreement with the local public utility to deliver drinking water in a dedicated network of pipes to your home.

By utilising recycled water for things like irrigation and toilet flushing, we can help save precious drinking water and preserve life's essentials

Pressure Sewer



2 What makes up a pressure sewer system?

The pressure sewer system is made up of the below key elements, as shown in the diagram (red outline shows the section of the pressure sewer system owned by Altogether and dashed outline shows the section owned by the homeowner).

1. House Discharge Line

The house discharge line is a small diameter pipe (not dissimilar to a large sprinkler system pipe) which connects the wastewater collection tank to the pressure sewer in the street.

2. Boundary Kit

The boundary kit ensures that wastewater which is already in the pressure sewer system cannot re-enter your property and enables maintenance staff to isolate the pump unit from the system in the event of an emergency.

3. Wastewater Collection Tank and Pump Unit

Installed underground, with only the top of the collection tank (or lid) visible, this component of the system includes a pump unit, collection tank and level monitors.

4. Pump Control Panel

A small box mounted to the wall of the house, the pump control panel contains all the electrical controls for the pump unit including both the audible and visual alarm systems and is linked by telemetry to Altogether Group's sewer monitoring system. The pump control panel has an audible and visual alarm to provide adequate warning when the pump unit needs to be serviced by Altogether Group's staff.

5. Inspection Shaft

The inspection shaft is a plumbing fixture that allows plumbers to inspect and service your property service drain. It is a key fixture for future inspections and maintenance works that may be required on the property. It is important that property owners maintain access to this fixture. The inspection shaft is the responsibility of the homeowner.

6. Overflow Relief Gully

Like in all sewer systems, an overflow relief gully (ORG) protects the interior of your home or building from sewage overflow. It is a drain-like fitting located outside the property that is an important part of the plumbing system. In the event of a sewer blockage, the ORG is designed to release any sewage overflow away from the interior

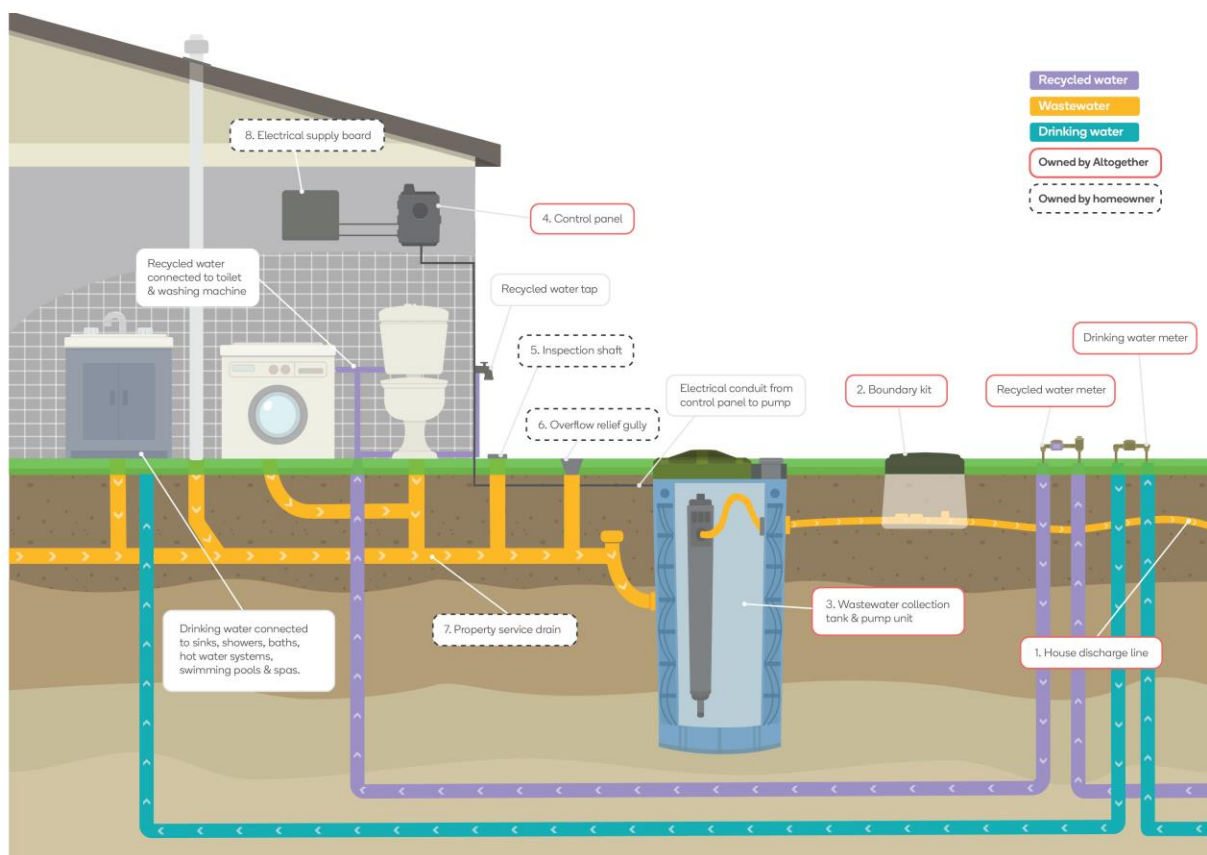
of the building and outside to a garden or external area. It is important for property owners to keep the ORG clear and unimpeded at all times and 75mm above the surrounding ground level to be Plumbing Code compliant and to ensure stormwater doesn't flow in and overwhelm the sewer system. The ORG is the responsibility of the home owner.

7. Property Service Drain

The property service drain is the section of gravity pipeline connecting the sewage pipe outlets from the house to the wastewater collection tank. The property service drain is the responsibility of the home owner.

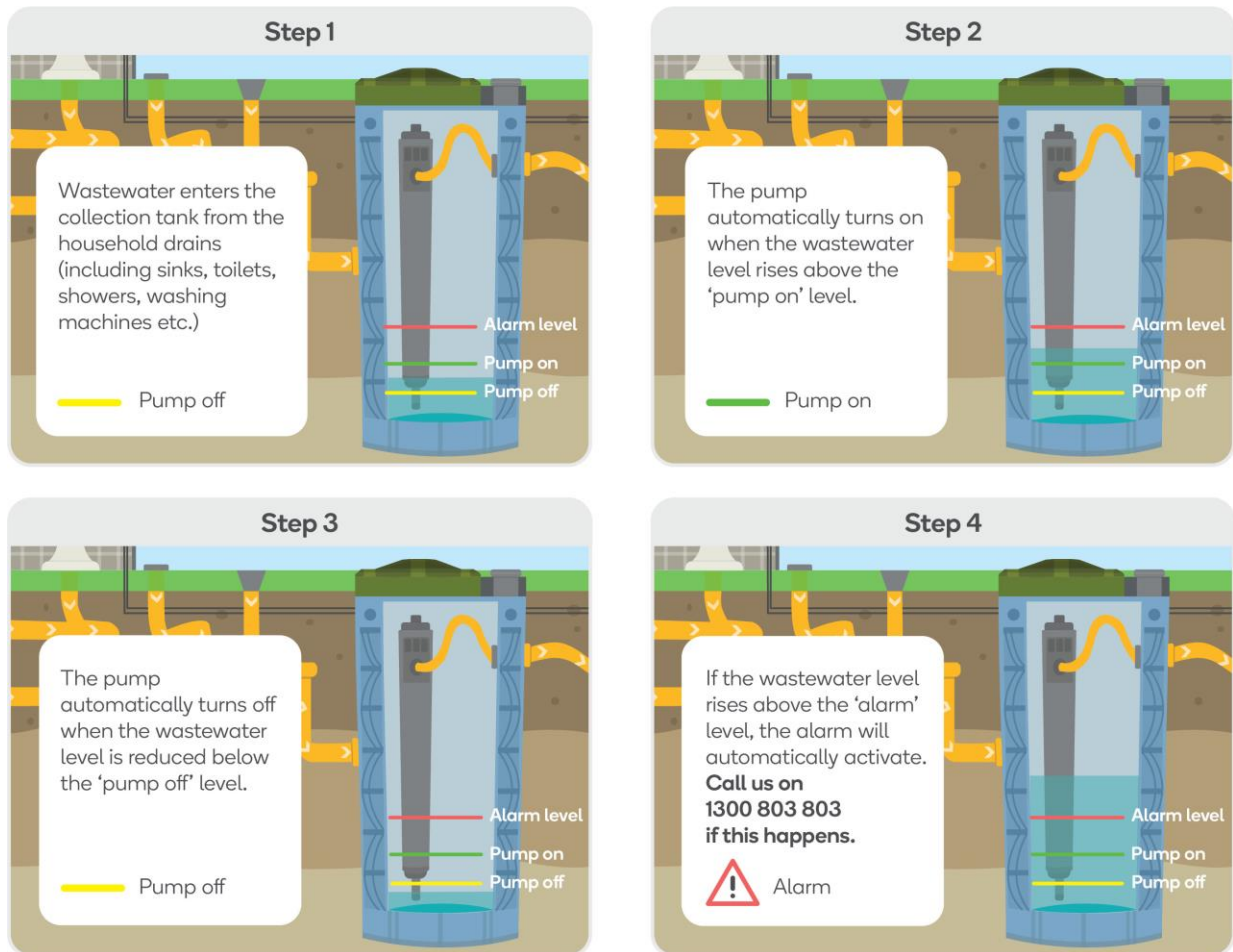
8. Electrical Supply Board

The electrical switchboard is a standard electrical switchboard which connects the property to the power supply system. It will have a connection point and circuit breaker designated to the power supply for the wastewater collection tank and pump unit. The associated power and operational costs are the responsibility of the home owner. If the power supply to the electrical switchboard is switched off for any reason, the on-lot sewer system will not work and sewage will be build up in the wastewater collection tank.



3 How Does it work?

The main component of the pressure sewer system is the wastewater collection tank and pump unit which is installed on your property. The pump unit works in the following way;



4 Maintenance and repairs

If for any reason the pump unit or pump-control panel fails, then the wastewater level in the tank will rise to a point where an audible alarm will sound. If the alarm is activated the resident should contact Altogether Group on 1300 803 803 (24/7) and minimise the use of any water until an Altogether Group representative attends the property. In no circumstance is the owner or resident required to operate any of the equipment nor can any contractors, other than an Altogether Group representative, work on the equipment.

4.1 Avoiding blockage and damage

The system will operate like a normal sewage system taking liquid waste from your toilet, sink, shower, bath, dishwasher and washing machine and transferring it to the Local Water Centre.

To avoid blockages and damage, certain items should not be placed down the drain (refer to the list on the right). Sink waste traps are easily installed in the kitchen and bathroom to help filter out rubbish so you can put it in the bin, rather than down the drain. If you are in doubt about what you can put into your recycled water system, please call 1300 803 803 and speak to our team, or visit your local community website.

4.2 Responsibilities on your property

Be mindful of the location of the collection tank and pipelines. The following points are important requirements in maintaining the condition and effective operation of the pressure sewer system:

The collection tank's lid is plastic and not designed to carry weight. Avoid walking, riding, driving or placing heavy weights (e.g. large pot plants) over the top of it. Keep the power to the pump unit on at all times.

The valves in the boundary kit and the vent on the collection tank must only be accessed and attended to by Altogether Group. A one metre space, clear of vegetation landscaping growth and other debris, around the collection tank lid is needed at all times for maintenance purposes.

You are responsible for ensuring that the collection tank lid is readily accessible at all times.

To avoid blockages and damage to the pressure sewer system the following items should **NOT** be placed into sinks or toilets:

- ✗ Nappies
- ✗ Sanitary napkins
- ✗ Tampons
- ✗ Wet wipes
- ✗ Cooking oil, fat or grease
- ✗ Gravel or sand (incl. aquarium stones & coffee grinds)
- ✗ Kitty litter
- ✗ Seafood shells
- ✗ Socks, rags or clothes
- ✗ Plastic
- ✗ Paint
- ✗ Glass
- ✗ Metal
- ✗ Explosives
- ✗ Flammable materials
- ✗ Petrol or diesel
- ✗ Stormwater/rainwater run-off

Call us on 1300 803 803

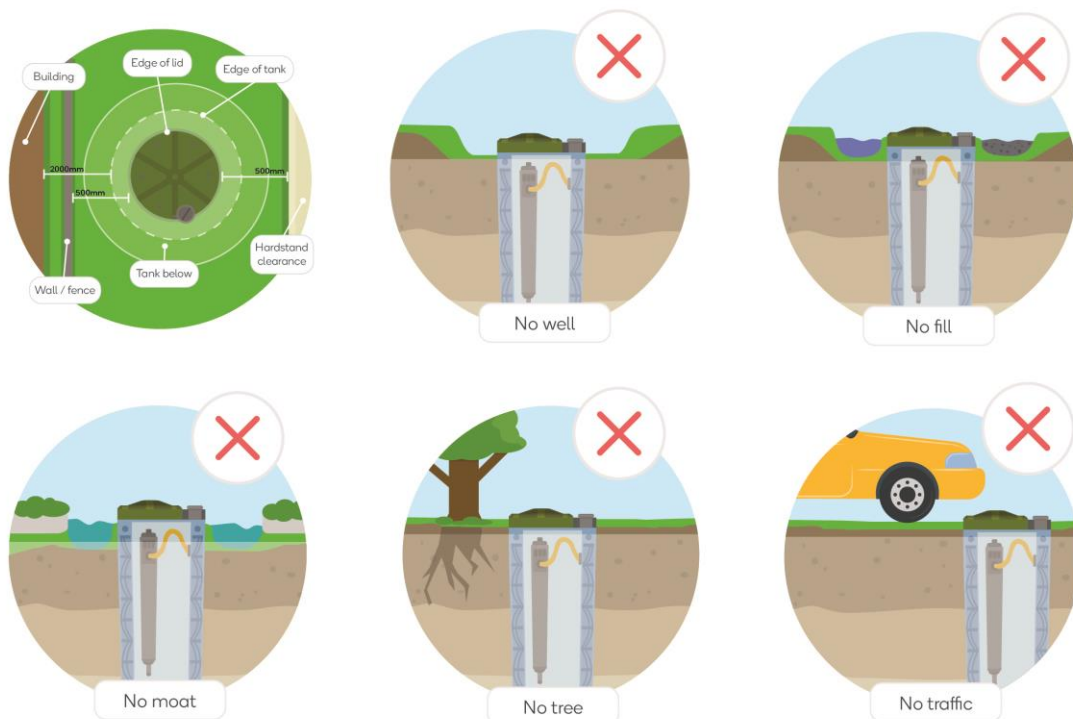
5 Landscaping

Landscaping over the house discharge line is permitted, but the wastewater collection tank lid and boundary kit are not to be covered. If the line requires repair, an Altogether representative will need access to the pipe. This may mean that landscaping will need to be removed. In this case Altogether will endeavor to minimise disruption to your garden.

It is also important that sufficient space is always available to access the collection tank, in case maintenance is required.

- Do not place objects or structures on or over the lid.
- Do not allow grass or other coverings to obscure the lid.
- Do not drive across or park vehicles on the lid.
- Retaining walls must adhere to minimum clearance requirements and must also be properly drained to ensure that water does not pond around the tank.

Please refer to Altogether's Landscaping guide found under the building and developing tab.



6 Installing a swimming pool or large spa

If you are adding a pool or spa to your home, you need to ensure you have consulted with Altogether and the local council to obtain the necessary approvals. Due to the high discharge rate of pumps serving swimming pools, external showers and wash down areas, connections to the household sewerage system are NOT permitted.

However, if you wish to seek approval from Altogether to connect to the pressure sewerage system, the following conditions need to be met:

- Any pump or pipe connecting the discharge to the wastewater tank is limited to a maximum total flow rate of 0.5 l/s or;
- An intermediary buffer tank is installed which controls the discharge flow rate to 0.5 l/s.

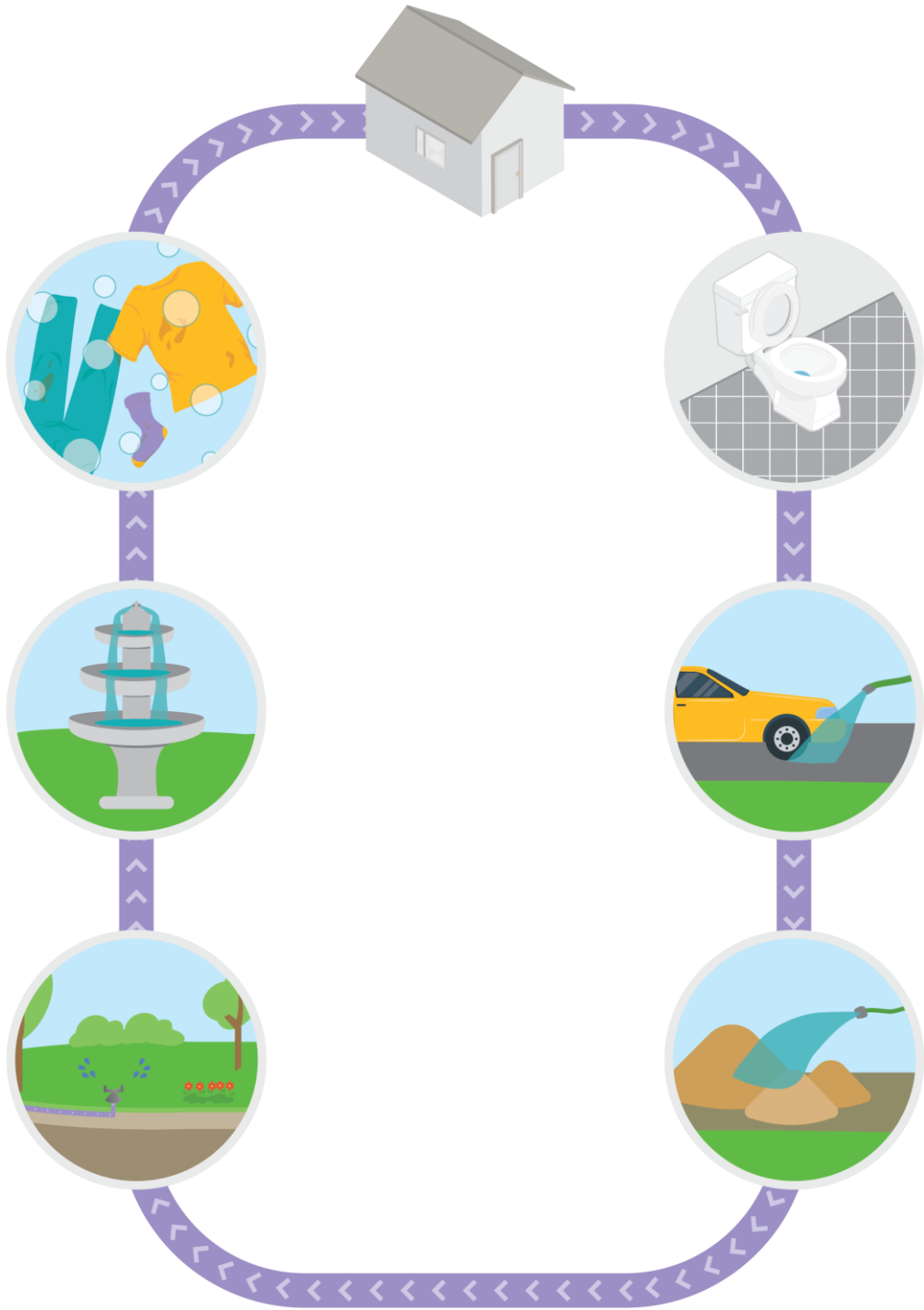
Any flows greater than this limit are not permitted and are likely to cause a system overflow.

Altogether requires all swimming pools to have cartridge type filters or equivalent, to ensure no backwashing water enters the pressure sewerage system. Please ring us on 1300 803 803, or your plumber for more detailed information.

Important: You are not permitted to fill your swimming pool with recycled water and must use drinking water.

If you want to install a swimming pool or spa system you must comply with our [Pool and Spa requirements](#).

Recycled Water



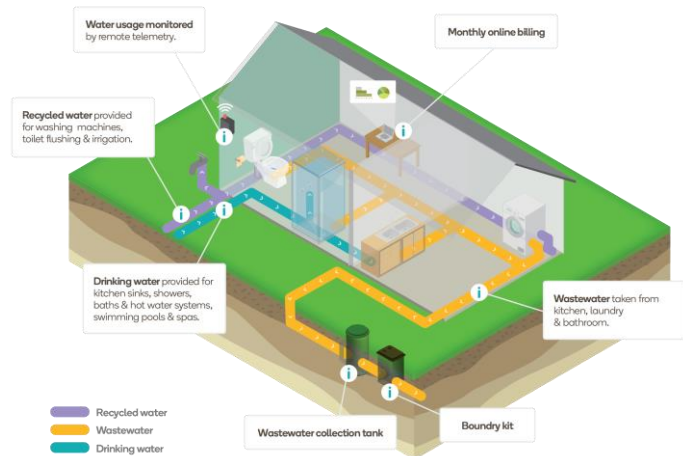
7 How it works

The recycled water and wastewater in your home are part of a cyclical water system. Wastewater is taken from bathrooms, toilets, laundries and kitchens straight to the Local Water Centre where it is purified and returned to homes, offices, and shops through purple recycled water pipes connected to washing machine cold taps, toilets and selected outdoor taps.

Let's step through the process

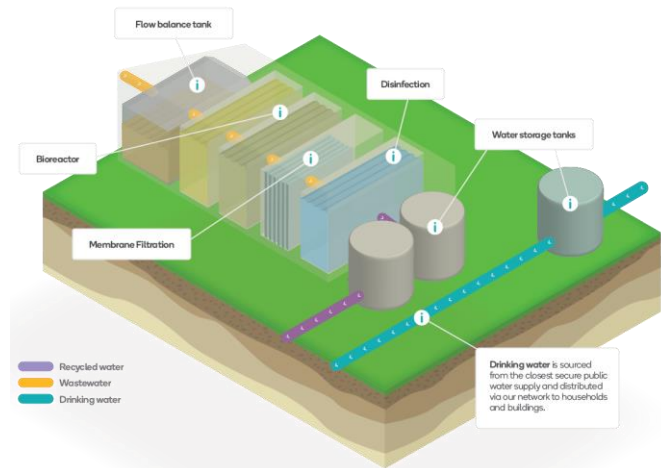
Recycled water in your home

Drinking water comes into your home and supplies your kitchen sinks, showers, bath hot water systems, swimming pools and spas. Wastewater is taken from your kitchen, bathroom and laundry and goes into the wastewater collection tank, which, is then pumped to the Local Water Centre via a pressure sewer network.



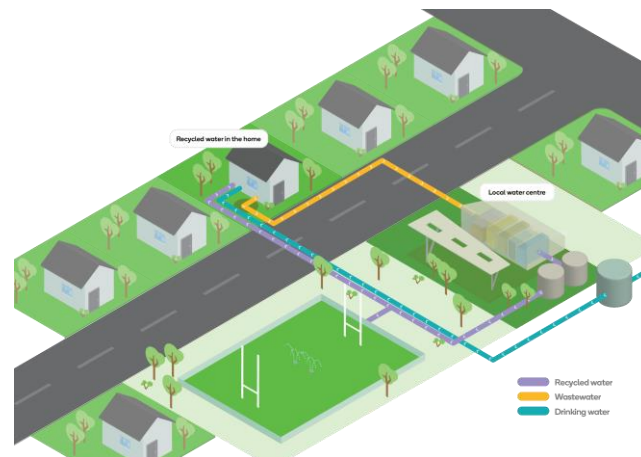
At the Local Water Centre

Wastewater is cleaned to the highest Australian standards, undergoing seven filtration and purification processes including Membrane Bioreactor (MBR), Ultraviolet (UV) and chlorine disinfection.



Recycled water back to your home

Once the water has been purified it gets sent back along purple pipes to your home for use in washing machines, toilet flushing and irrigation. Signs marking the recycled water taps make sure you always know when you are using recycled water so you can use it for the right purposes. Your plumber must install these signs.



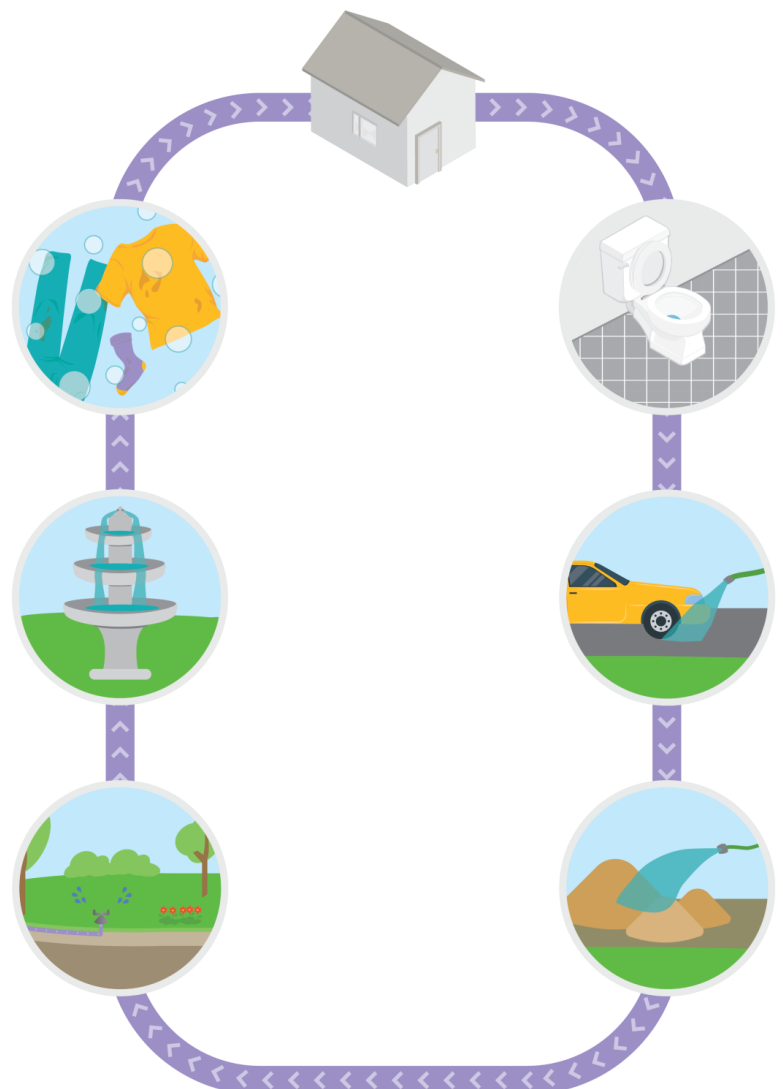
8 Using recycled water

Recycled water comes to you through purple pipes that are completely separate from the drinking water system. Our clear, high quality recycled water is very safe to use. We meet strict recycled water quality guidelines at all times. Where approved for use in your community, recycled water is great for:

- Flushing toilets
- Washing clothes
- Watering the garden
- Washing cars, houses (external), outdoor furniture
- Ornamental water features

Wash home grown fruit and vegetables with drinking water before eating them.

Refer to your [community's page](#) on the Altogether website to confirm what the authorised purposes for recycled water are in your community.



You cannot drink recycled water

Recycled water is clean, does not smell, is safe and monitored to the strictest standards by NSW Health. In Australia, however, we are not allowed to use it for drinking or personal uses such as cooking or bathing. If you do accidentally drink recycled water it is unlikely you will get sick however, if there are signs of illness seek medical advice. Make sure you read the Dos and Don'ts of using recycled water.

Recycled water is used in residential homes around the world including: Singapore, UK, US, Japan and India. Melbourne and Adelaide have recycled water, and in NSW the Rouse Hill dual reticulation scheme has been supplying recycled water to more than 15,000 residents since 1998.

Recycled water is exempt from water restrictions

Water restrictions do not apply to your recycled water system. Using recycled water means you can maintain green lawns throughout the year.

Altogether believes in sustainability and a future for our children and our children's children and everything we do is aimed at making the world a better place.

Recycled water has many benefits both financially and environmentally and we continually strive to find new ways to enable our customers to save money and save the environment.

Community benefits

Our recycled water network brings many benefits

- We give communities greater control over their water use and supply.
- We provide local councils & communities with a new secure and renewable source of water.
- We provide recycled water to keep recreational facilities green, particularly during drought and in the middle of summer.
- Our systems have been designed to address climate change by reducing drinking water consumption and energy use.
- Our systems are designed to embrace new technologies into the future, giving customers and communities the best possible water services.

Environmentally friendly

We are environmentally friendly because we:

- Conserve thousands of litres of drinking water annually in each home.
- Prevent thousands of tonnes of sewage from being pumped into waterways.
- Create a secure, reliable water source now and into the future.
- Locally reuse wastewater and convert it to a clean, colourless and odourless water supply.
- Use innovative recycled water technology, including Membrane Bioreactor (MBR) and UV technology, producing recycled water that exceeds Australia's highest standards. MBR does not directly produce methane or carbon dioxide emissions.

9 Good to know

Privacy

Altogether Group is committed to preserving and respecting the privacy and confidentiality of our Customers. We ensure Customers' information is managed in accordance with the Privacy Act 1998 (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles as set out in Altogether's Privacy Policy and Credit Information Policy located at www.altogethergroup.com.au/privacy as updated from time to time.

Complaints

We welcome Customer and Community feedback as it helps us to identify problems and improve our operations. For more information on how we will address your concerns, and the relevant ombudsman contact details, please see our [Complaints and Dispute Resolution Policy](#).

Emails, SMS & contact information

We will email or SMS you regular updates about your account, our business and things that affect you.

For faults and emergencies please call 1300 803 803. Our team is on call 24/7 ready to assist you.

For general enquires complete this form www.altogethergroup.com.au/contactus

Fees and charges

In NSW, connecting to our network gets a high water rating in BASIX. It means you do not need a rainwater tank. Talk with your builder about the BASIX Water Kit, which includes the equipment and connection you need to receive your water services.

We have a price parity policy for drinking water, which means you won't be charged more than the regulated price offered by the public water authority.

Payment Assistance

If you are having any difficulties paying your bill, please get in touch so we can advise you on payment assistance options including available concessions, rebates, payment extensions, payment plans and our financial hardship program.

Concessions

To get a concession you must own and live in your own home.

Your home must be either a single dwelling, dual occupancy, strata or company title unit, or a unit in a retirement village with a life term lease.

10 Plumbing Cross-Connection Check List

	Yes	No
<p><i>Step 1</i> Turn off the drinking water supply to your property at the drinking water meter. This is NOT the lilac or purple coloured meter, which is for recycled water.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>Step 2</i> Turn on all your external water taps one by one. If the tap does not run dry after a short time, it connected to the recycled water system. This means the pipe/s should be colour purple or lilac and have a recycled water warning sign marking it. Water from these taps should only be used for watering your garden or washing your car.</p> <p>Are all recycled water taps coloured lilac/purple, with a warning sign?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>Step 3</i> Flush your toilets. Your toilets should refill as they are connected to the recycled water meter, which is still turned on.</p> <p>Did your toilet refill after flushing?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>Step 4</i> Turn on all insides taps including the sink, bath and shower taps one by one. These taps should all run dry in a short time.</p> <p>Did these taps all run dry?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>Step 5</i> Turn off all inside taps and then turn on the drinking water meter back on. Slowly turn on the drinking water tap that is located the furthest from the meter to enable air to purged from the pipeline while it is being recharged.</p> <p>Is the drinking water now flowing through your inside taps?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>Step 6</i> Appliances such as dishwashers and evaporative air-conditioners should be connected to the drinking water supply – but should not be tested with this supply turned off. To check appliances, make sure the drinking water meter is turned on and turn off the recycled water meter (which is lilac/purple). Turn on the appliances one by one. These should fill as normal. If they do not fill, they are wrongly connected to the recycled water system.</p> <p>Did your appliances refill as normal?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Help? Please phone 1300 803 803

If you require any help working through these steps; or

- You did not answer YES to all of the steps; or
- Your have any queries about recycled water.

11 Frequently asked questions

How much electricity does the pump unit use?

Annual power costs for the pump are equal to the cost of boiling an electric kettle - about \$36 per household per year.

What should I do if I go on holidays?

If you are leaving your home for more than three days, it's a good idea to flush water down the drains before you leave by having a shower, bath, or putting on a load of washing. This will activate the pump in the collection tank and flush clean water through the system while you are away. Do not turn off the main electrical switchboard power switch to the pump unit. If no water is being used, the pump unit will not operate. Without the power turned on, if there is a leaking fixture in the house, the pump unit cannot pump any water and the collection tank may overflow.

What do I need to consider when extending or modifying my home?

The property owner must contact Altogether Group if making property modifications which may affect the system, e.g. extending the house near or over the location of the collection tank or pipelines.

Advice should be sought regarding the suitability of the collection tank and pump unit prior to commencing any construction activities. Moving the collection tank will be dependent on the layout of the land, as all wastewater from the house must gravitate into the collection tank.

The house discharge line can be moved to accommodate extensions to the house or the construction of a shed etc. When contemplating any such modifications to the property, the property owner must contact Altogether Group. Any modification or enhancement of on property infrastructure which triggers upgrades in the wastewater collection system shall be payable by the property owner.

Where does rain water from my roof go?

The collection tank and pump unit have not been designed to accommodate rainwater, which should never be plumbed into any sewerage system in accordance with relevant plumbing standards.

If rainwater was to enter the system, alarms will activate and the collection tank may overflow. If you notice the alarm regularly coming on during or after rain, please contact us on 1300 803 803.

What happens with I have additional occupants and/or visitors?

Sudden increases in use of a property's pump unit as a result of increased wastewater flows, either through increased activity at the residence or large numbers of visitors staying for a holiday period, will not impact upon the pressure sewerage system. However, the pump unit might have to pump more frequently.

How can I best prepare for contractors accessing my meter and unit?

Even the kindest of pets can turn on strangers – please make sure our contractors can work safely on your property. This also includes removing rubbish, spiders and insect nests or overgrown shrubs.

- Keep dogs safely secured during the day or place them in a different area to where the meters and pressure sewer are located.
- Call us on 1300 803 803 to register the fact you have a dog on your property.
- Do not use private padlocks or locking devices on the meters. This ensures our contractors and emergency crews can access the meters especially in the case of fire.

- Trim back your shrubs and gardens.
- Remove wasp, spiders and insect nest.
- Build fences and gates behind, rather than in front of, network equipment. If this is not the case, leave your gate unlocked to provide access.

We have a range of internal warnings and procedures in place. These include a dog register to alert service contractors before entering a property – please make sure you comply.

Are the pump units smelly and/or noisy?

Pump units are located in the ground so any sound will be practically unnoticeable. The collection tank is vented to avoid any odour problems.

What happens in the event of a power outage?

From time to time power outages occur. Don't forget the pressure sewer system runs on power from your house. If there is a power service interruption please minimise your water use. You can do this by:

- Keeping showers brief
- Not leaving taps running
- Minimising your water use where possible

Toilets can still be flushed and normal kitchen activities are fine, but try to minimise their use if possible.

If it appears the power interruption will be longer than eight hours, we may visit your property to provide temporary power to the system. Please ensure any gates on your property to access the system are unlocked and animals are secure.

How can I best maintain my recycled water system?

NSW Office of Fair Trading and Altogether Group inspect all houses during the construction phase to ensure recycled water and drinking water pipes have been plumbed correctly.

It is good practice to isolate the recycled water main and the drinking water main in your front yard one at a time, and once a year. Check the supplies are connected to the correct outlets by alternately turning on the drinking water and recycled water supply and a corresponding tap to check that there are no cross connections (refer to page 18, *Plumbing cross-connection check list*). If you have queries please consult your plumber.

If you have any plumbing, building or landscaping works undertaken, you should ask your contractor to make sure the water systems are operating for the correct purpose once the work is complete. A plumber making any alternations to your pipework must provide you with a Certificate of Compliance and provide a copy to Altogether Group.

How can I check for concealed leaks?

A leaking water pipe can occur at anytime and can affect both new and old homes. Here's a tip on how to find leaks:

- Turn off all taps and water appliances
- Take a reading of the water meter and write it down
- Keep taps turned off, don't use any water, and take another reading one hour later
- If the readings have changed or the last number/dial (litres) is still moving you may have a leak

We suggest you contact a licensed plumber to find and repair the leak.

What should I consider when excavating and building?

Danger: Underground electrical wires

Electrical power lines and alarm wires are buried underground between the tank and the remote controller. If you need to dig in this area, contact your builder or Dial Before you Dig www.1100.com.au to locate the lines

Tip



Notify contractors about the pressure sewer and recycled water system. Any builders or contractors undertaking work around the pressure sewer system need to understand where the pressure sewer infrastructure is positioned

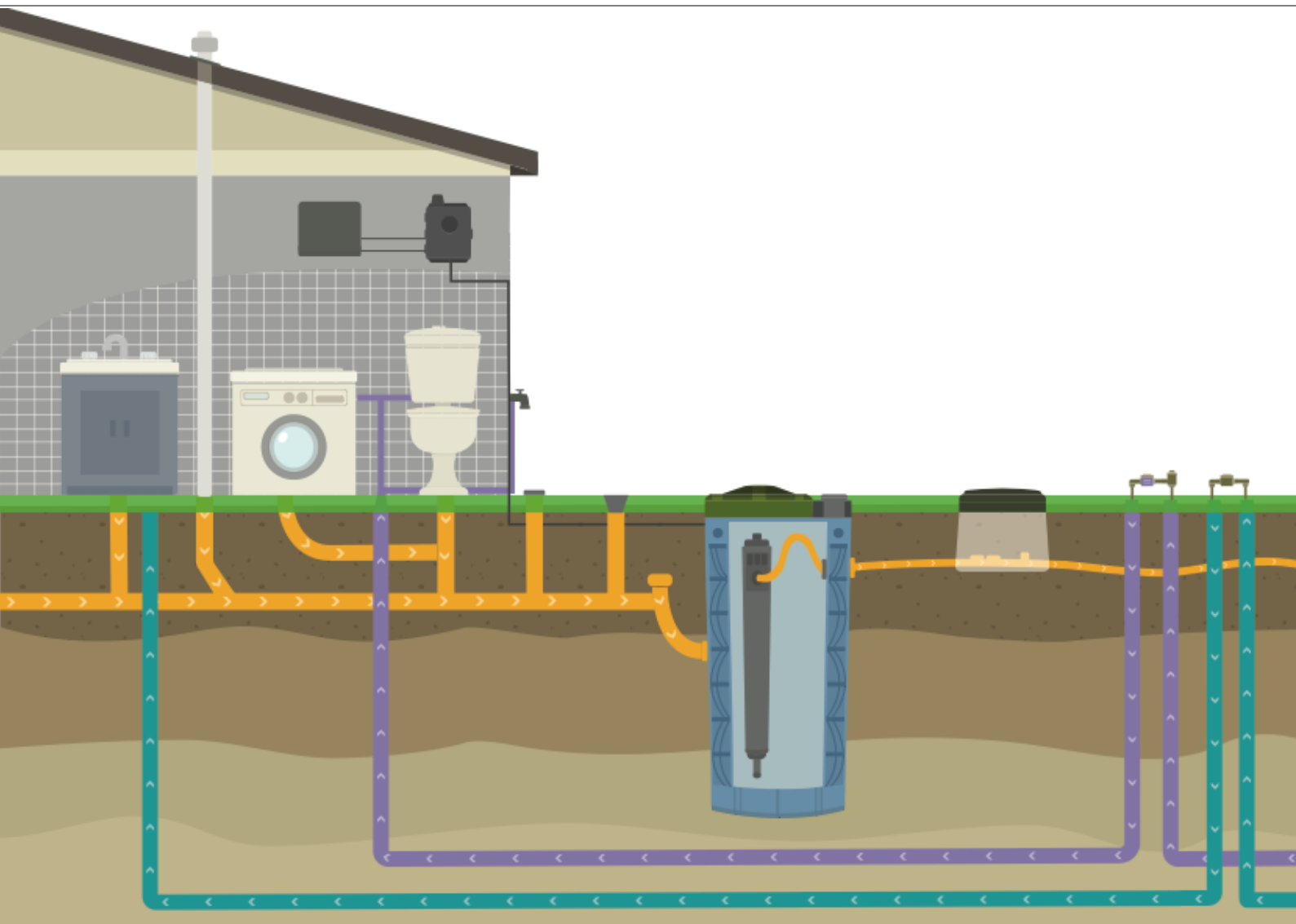
Questions?

Call us on: 1300 803 803

Email us: contact@altogethergroup.com.au

altogether.

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12 Alarms, faults and response

Why is my pump control alarm going off?

There are a number of reasons why the pump control alarm may be activated. The following table provides a step-by-step guide to dealing with an activated alarm

Damage

If you, or someone else for whom we are not responsible (such as visitors) damages the boundary kit, pump unit, control panel, electrical cabling, connecting pipe work or any other part of the system, we will arrange for the repairs to be made. You must reimburse us for the cost of any such repairs. If you become aware of any damage to any part of the pressure sewer system you must report it to us as soon as reasonably possible.

What has happened?	Alarm sounds and the light is flashing	Power outage	Power outage for longer than 8 hours	Alarm sounds frequently and then turns off	Your neighbour's alarm sounds or the light is flashing
What do you do?	Turn off the audible alarm.	Wait one hour before reporting	Minimise your non-essential water use and give us a call	Investigate	Contact us
How to do it	<p>Audible alarm: Press the button on the underside of the control panel to disable the audible alarm. The audible alarm will automatically shut off after five minutes (regardless of whether the button is pressed)</p> <p>Flashing light: The flashing light will only turn off if one of our contractors resets it or the problem which triggered the alarm is resolved.</p> <p> Call us on 1300 803 803 if the flashing light does not turn off within 1 hour.</p>	<p>If the alarm activates following a power outage, please wait for one hour before contacting us.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The alarm may sound when the power is restored as the wastewater level in the storage tank may have built up to above the alarm level. Once power is restored, the pump will recommence pumping but may take up to one hour for the wastewater level in the tank to drop below the alarm level (this is due to a number of other pumps trying to empty their tanks at the same time). Please minimize your water use (shower and washing clothes) during power outages to reduce the risk of an overflow. 	<p>Reduce water use by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not turning on the washing machine while the alarm is active Take shorter showers If the bath is full, don't empty it until after the alarm is cancelled 	<p>Determine if there is any sudden discharge (such as from a swimming pool).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the alarm sounds during or after rainfall, the alarm might be activating because rainwater is entering the storage tank. If the alarm continues to sound frequently and turn off, please give us a call so we can investigate 	<p>If your neighbour is not home please contact us so we can investigate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The audible alarm will automatically shut off after five minutes.



You should never switch off power to the pumping unit. If you do, you may be required to pay for the cost of any call outs or repairs that occur



Ensure that our contractors have clear access to the waste water tank at all times

In case of alarms please call us on 1300 803 803