

Adoption of Private Sewers & Lateral Drains by Water Authorities



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Government has approved legislation which from the 1st October 2011 transfers ownership of all privately owned shared drains to the water authorities (Anglian Water Services Ltd and Severn Trent Water Ltd depending on where you live) which from then on will become "public sewers".

The Private Sewers and Lateral Drains legislation does not amend the drainage legislation within the Building Regulations and as yet Local authorities have received no guidance from the Government on how this will impact on the requirements of the Building Regulations. It is however assumed that there will be joint responsibility between Local Authorities and the Water Authority to approve new drainage systems.

Water companies should already have contacted all bill payers in their areas to explain the proposals.

For further information on the transfer of your drains to the water authority and any impact this may have on proposals to extend your property, please contact either:

Anglian Water Services Limited

Telephone 08457 145 145

[Anglian Water webpage on the transfer of private drains and sewers](#)

Severn Trent Water Limited

Telephone 08456 016 616

[Severn Trent Water webpage on the transfer of private drains and sewers](#)

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

Telephone 08459 335 577

[DEFRA's webpage on sewers](#)

You are advised to seek advice from the relevant Water Authority if you are proposing to carry out any of the following work on a property:

- 1 Build an extension over or within 3m of a public sewer
- 2 Construct a new building over or within 3m of a public sewer
- 3 Make a new drainage connection to a public sewer

Works are likely to be exempt from requiring water authority involvement if:

- 1 Sewer is less than 3m deep
- 2 Sewer less than 150mm diameter
- 3 Built over length 6m or less
- 4 No manholes or access points built over
- 5 Suitable foundation design that ensures no loads are imposed on sewer