

What's a sewer vent shaft?

We install sewer vent shafts on our sewer network to allow airflow in and out of the sewer. This helps the sewer to work properly.

Previously our sewer vents were constructed with cast iron and galvanised steel. Vents are now constructed using stainless steel to ensure longevity and low maintenance. The vents in our service area can be up to 14 metres high.

Why have sewer vents?

Not only do they help sewage to flow through our pipes, they also allow the removal of hydrogen sulphide gas, which in the right conditions can become sulphuric acid. This acid eats into concrete, deteriorating our pipes and requiring ongoing maintenance and repair.

So, the vents play an important role in reducing the risk of sewer deterioration. Deterioration can lead to a need for rehabilitation, which is both costly, and inconvenient for our customers.



Where would I find them?

Vents are usually around 400 metres apart in established areas of the sewer network, and are normally located in laneways or at the backs of properties.

In newer areas, they can be up to 1,000 metres apart. They're usually located near a maintenance hole. We display vents on our asset information as seen in **Figure 1**. This information is also available on our free downloadable app – **SEWmap**.

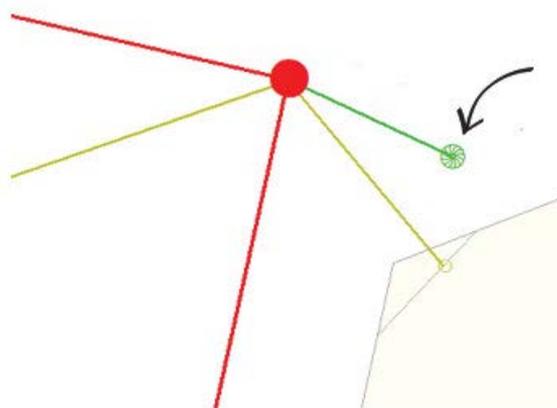


Figure 1. Sewer vent shaft as an asset information symbol.

There's a sewer vent near my development project – does it affect me?

If you're building or developing and there's a sewer vent within 50 metres of your site, you'll need to think about the vent early on in your design plans. Sewer vents need to terminate (vent) to a clear area, usually at least 3 metres above the roof of any adjacent building.

When developing near a vent, the building designer/architect should consider the location of any openings into the building to avoid the potential for odours entering the building.

For example, avoid locating balconies, opening windows or air conditioning intakes near the vent. If vents don't extend 3 metres above the top of the proposed building, or the vent termination cowl is within 10 metres of any building opening (including balconies), we'll review the vent and the building plans.

If we determine the proposed building is too close to the vent, you have the option to amend your building design, or talking to us about other possible options. Please be aware that our consultation process may take some time and that it may be simpler and quicker for you to change your design first. We request that you consider all modifications possible to avoid your building being too close to the vent before we look at potential relocation options.

Can I remove a vent, or request a vent to be removed?

Vents are our assets and cannot be modified or removed by third parties.

As mentioned earlier, they're an important part of our sewer network and help maintain the integrity of our sewers. With this in mind, we'll not approve the removal of a vent.

I need the vent moved, how do I organise that?

Where there's no choice but to move the vent, we'll look at potential alternative locations. Finding suitable locations can be difficult. We'll need to consider a variety of issues including odour, public safety, overhead power lines, in-ground services, and access for maintenance.

Once we've identified a potential location, it's the developer or property owner's responsibility to get permission from landowners adjacent to the proposed vent location before we provide a quote for the works. The developer must also make sure that the area chosen is clear of in-ground services, with a minimum of 2 metres by 2 metres unimpeded space, and safe from vehicles and traffic.

After you've organised permissions

We'll then provide a quote for the relocation works. The quote will include the costs associated with the demolition of the existing vent, and the design and construction of the new vent.

Vent relocations are a difficult, costly and time-consuming process and in many circumstances can cause project delays. The first option should always be to amend the building design to consider the vent, and ensure that building openings are well away from the vent.

Need to get in touch?

You can request asset information through our PropertyConnect® website southeastwater.com.au/propertyconnect or download our **SEWmap** app on the App Store or Google Play.

Alternatively, you call us on **9552 3770**, **Monday to Friday** between **8 am** and **5 pm**.

