

## Do you currently use a septic tank, soakaway, or cesspool to dispose of your household's wastewater?

## Have you been contacted by the Environment Agency or Local Authority who are concerned that your septic tank, soakaway, or cesspool may be causing pollution to the local environment?

If so you may be eligible to apply for our 'first time sewerage' process. This factsheet explains the process in more detail and there is an application for you to complete if you think you may be eligible.

### What is first time sewerage?

First time sewerage is for customers who are not connected to our public sewer network and who currently have private sewer systems. We assess the need for the build and construction of a new public sewer for householders to connect to who've been notified by the Environment Agency or Local Authority as causing pollution to the local environment.

### What properties are eligible to apply for first time sewerage?

We may be able to help and provide a solution where there are two or more separate domestic properties causing or contributing to localised pollution of a nearby river, stream or ditch.

We will only recommend constructing and building a new sewer if it is found to be the most cost effective solution. Often existing issues with sewerage treatment may be resolved by repair or maintenance and we would always advise you to look into this first before applying for a new sewer.

### How do I apply for first time sewerage?

An application form is attached along with this factsheet. If you need any further information you can call us on **0345 672 3723**, or visit our website [unitedutilities.com](http://unitedutilities.com).

Before you apply, have a chat with your neighbours to see if they would support your application. A new sewer is only practical and affordable if a number of households are involved.

### What happens after we receive your application?

Once we've received your application, we'll contact you to confirm how long it will take us to assess.

Firstly your application will be reviewed to see if it meets the qualifying criteria for our first time sewerage process. If it meets the criteria it will then go through a further detailed technical, environmental and cost assessment looking at all options to ensure that the most affordable solution is found.

As part of the assessment we will:

- Liaise with the Environment Agency, Local Authority and local householders
- Survey the existing system.

Please bear in mind, this assessment can take up to 12 months to complete.

### What happens when a decision is made?

Following the technical, environmental and economic assessment, we'll send out a letter to all households involved confirming our decision. Please again bear in mind, the assessment can take up to 12 months.

If your application has been successful we'll detail the next steps with timescales for the work that needs to take place.

These timescales will be determined by our investment programme, which is set out every five years, it could therefore be several years before the project is completed.

If you have not been successful we'll detail the reasons why.

### For further information



[unitedutilities.com](http://unitedutilities.com)



**0345 672 3723**



United Utilities  
Wastewater Network  
Strategy  
Haweswater House  
Lingley Mere Business Park  
Lingley Green Avenue  
Great Sankey  
Warrington  
WA5 3LP

## What can I do if I disagree with the decision?

If you disagree with our assessment, or with the timescales for the construction and build of the new public sewer, we'll provide all the information you need to appeal to the Environment Agency. Their decision will be final.

## What costs are involved?

We will be responsible for the new public sewer, its construction and future maintenance.

However, if you choose to connect to the new sewer, you'll be liable for the following costs:

- The arrangement and cost of installing the private house drain between your property and the property boundary to connect to the sewer
- Obtaining building regulations approval from the local authority for the above work
- The cost and arrangements for emptying and making safe the old private drainage system, which may include re-arrangement of internal and external drainage systems
- A one-off standard payment charge to us to make the first time connection to the sewer

Once connected to the public sewer, annual sewerage charges will be added to your bill, starting from the date of connection.

## Is a householder obliged to connect to the public sewer when it is laid?

No, but we would always advise that all householders who are contributing towards the pollution connect to the new public sewer. This ensures any pollution is stopped, helps protect the environment and is an affordable option for all.

If any householder does not wish to connect, this may still cause and contribute to pollution in the local area. In this case the Environment Agency or Local Authority could decide to take action. If there is a public sewer within 30m of a property, the Local Authority may ask for a connection to be made.

## Who should I contact for further information?

We understand this is a complex process and the application takes a long time. We can help answer any questions you may have. We have a team of experts who can offer support and advice. Please call us on **0345 672 3723** and you'll be put through to the correct team.

If you would prefer to write to us you can send your questions to:

**United Utilities**  
**Wastewater Network Strategy**  
**Haweswater House**  
**Lingley Mere Business Park**  
**Lingley Green Avenue**  
**Great Sankey**  
**Warrington**  
**WA5 3LP**



### About us

United Utilities is the North West's water company. We keep the taps flowing and toilets flushing for seven million customers every day. From Crewe to Carlisle, we work hard behind the scenes to help your life flow smoothly.