

A Sewerage Plan that gives details regarding type and location of sewer pipes on your property can be obtained from:
Ipswich City Council
45 Roderick Street, Ipswich Qld 4305
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This brochure was developed by
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Water & Trees



In Ipswich, the average household uses almost 1000 litres of water per day and up to 60% of the domestic water is used outdoors in the garden or pool. By conserving water you can save money and protect the environment.





Water and Trees

We plant trees in our gardens and around the home to beautify our living area. Well-placed trees conserve the environment by creating shade, reducing water evaporation and wind movement. Trees also reduce air pollution, prevent soil erosion and can attract native wildlife to your garden. But how can you plant and make your trees more water wise?

How can you make sure that they do not create problems, when fully grown which may be both inconvenient and costly? Trees planted in the wrong place can be a problem, where sewer pipes and drains can be blocked by water-seeking tree roots. Planting trees in the right place the first time around can reduce the cost of having to maintain wastewater and drainage pipes.

As your Water and Wastewater Utility, Ipswich Water is not only committed to pouring life into our community, but also letting life flow through our environment.

Look over the following tree planting guide before planting your new trees. You will find that it is filled with helpful hints.

Water efficient planting

How to Plant a Tree

in a water wise way:

1



Don't dig a square hole; create a shallow basin shape as lateral root spread is vital for almost all trees. Very few have taproots. So widen the initial planting hole. A hole two to three times the width of the plant bag is usually needed. This widens the water basin. Avoid smooth hole sides by using a fork to loosen and roughen the edges.

2



Mix only one third well-decomposed compost in the hole and use the same soil to backfill. Water Crystals can be added to the soil to help keep the soil moist.

3



Water the tree deeply and thoroughly, but not too often. Roots then follow the water deeper into the soil. Frequent watering fosters root growth too close to the surface. Water once a week in the heat of summer and less frequently in cooler periods (avoid watering deciduous trees in winter – this is their dormant season, when there is no growth).

Water each tree individually. A pipe with a diameter of about 5cm can be inserted down to the root ball for direct watering. You might also 'plant' an old plastic bottle filled with water next to the tree. Put little stab holes in the bottle bottom and put the top back on. You now have a private reservoir for your tree.

How to Plant a Tree

4



To combat evaporation, cover exposed soil around your tree with a thick mulch (perhaps made from dry grass, pebbles, bark chips or wood chips). Most tree root systems do not compete well against lawn grass. Mulching can lead to a fourfold increase in a tree's fine root development.

5



Some lawn grasses stunt tree growth. Don't pile up mulch or soil against the stem. Spread it across the whole of the water basin about 5-10cm thick. Don't cover the tree trunk's base with mulch (keep a small gap of 1cm between the tree bark and mulch layer). It can lead to bark injury.

6



Allow for some movement when staking. This enables the tree to thicken its trunk and branches and fosters root development. As soon as the tree can support itself, remove the stake. Ties to anchor the tree to the stake must not be too tight.

Symptoms of water stress in trees:

- Leaves that curl up or fold up against the normal growth style of the tree.
- Leaf drop out of season.
- Stunted growth of stems.
- New leaves are smaller than the norm.
- Failure to shoot new leaves and branches in growing season.
- Die-back of stems.
- Unable to produce good flowers and fruit as would be the case in a normal rainy season.

Where to Plant a Tree

It is important to choose your planting site carefully. Bear in mind the shade you require and the proximity to buildings, water and sewer pipes, pools and paving. You do not want to cut a tree down at a later stage because it is causing damage.

In a search for water, tree roots can invade sewer pipes through cracks and joints causing blockages. Sewer and drainage pipes are the most vulnerable targets for tree roots as the backfilling around the pipes attracts water and makes the soil softer and easier to penetrate.

- Never plant large trees close to your home as they can cause serious structural damage. Trees are best planted at least 5 m from the house.
- If planting large-growing trees, avoid planting them above or near sewer and water lines to prevent the tree roots from invading and blocking pipes.
- Consider the following hazardous situations before planting trees: Overhead powerlines - taking into consideration the size of the tree when it reaches full maturity; blind spots near driveways. Also take into account your neighbours' drains, paving and buildings before planting trees.

- Do plant trees to provide a screen or backdrop.
- Do plant trees to add visual interest or accent to a space.

A tell tale sign that tree roots are growing in your private sewer is water backing up with possible overflows from your sewer trap.

Ipswich Water will investigate all reported blockages and advise the owner/tenant of charges involved in clearing a blockage found in their private sewer. Alternatively, you have the option to organise a plumber yourself. Property sewers up to the point of connection to Ipswich Water's sewer are the maintenance responsibility of the property owner.

Tree roots need to be removed and cracked and broken private pipes should be repaired or replaced. Call Ipswich Water for more advice.

Did you know?

As a partner in the Ipswich Enviroplan, Ipswich Water has developed a Koala Food Tree Plantation at the Bundamba Wastewater Centre. These trees will also help to reduce soil erosion, provide shade and windbreaks, and attract wildlife to the region.

Which Tree to Plant

Which tree to plant for your area:

- Choose trees that are suitable to our climate. They use less water.
- Plant trees that have non-invasive roots. Tree roots match the area covered by the tree canopy.
- Think “sewer friendly” trees. Before buying trees, discuss tree root structures and growth patterns with Bushland Friendly Nurseries in Ipswich.
- Ask for advice and assistance in selecting appropriate trees to plant from local nurseries.

Did you Know?

Plant lists for native species for particular areas are available from the Ipswich City Council's - Conservation, Parks and Sports Department.

Website: www.ipswich.qld.gov.au

