



Smoke testing FAQs

Smoke testing is used by Hunter Water for routine maintenance, to investigate reported odours, and to identify where stormwater is entering the sewer system.



How does smoke testing work?

Using odourless, non-toxic smoke and high capacity blowers, smoke is forced through the wastewater pipes. We will then monitor the area to see if or where smoke comes out.

Why does Hunter Water do smoke testing?

Smoke testing is an effective and helpful way to:

- show us if our wastewater maintenance hole is damaged
- check for leaks in pipes and fixtures
- locate cracked, broken or unsealed pipes or joints underground
- find out if stormwater downpipes are incorrectly connected to the wastewater system.

What is the benefit of smoke testing?

Smoke testing allows us to quickly and effectively identify problems requiring action in the wastewater network. Resolving these issues can result in less system backups and overflows.

Will the smoke harm my health?

The smoke is more like a mist – it is environmentally safe, non-toxic and will disappear after a few minutes without any odour.

Do I need to take any action or be home when smoke testing is performed?

You do not need to be home during the smoke testing and at no time will our crews need to enter residences or buildings. You will see smoke testing crews documenting the testing, taking photos and measuring distances. Please ensure there is safe access to the outside of the building on the day. Pets or other animals should be appropriately restrained.

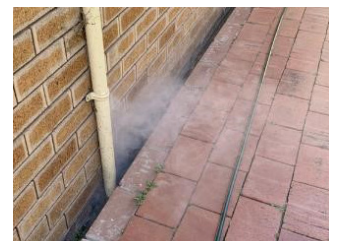
How do I know when my property will be inspected?

Property owners and occupiers will be notified in advance. The work will be completed by Hunter Water's contractor, Interflow. The team will carry identification at all times, and will door knock or place a card in your letterbox to let you know they are working in your street.

What if I see smoke during the inspection?

It's normal to see smoke coming out of your private wastewater vent pipes, which are usually located on the roof or side of the house. This shows that the vent pipes are in good working order and your wastewater system is connected correctly.

You may see smoke coming from the outside drains or gutters on your property, and sometimes it might enter your home through the laundry, kitchen, or bathroom drains. The smoke does not indicate a fire, but please let our team know if you see smoke in your home during our inspections. The smoke will clear in a few minutes with normal ventilation.



What if Hunter Water's contractor identifies a leak during smoke testing?

Hunter Water will contact you to discuss the next steps if a problem is detected.