

PLANTING NEAR DRAINS AND SEWERS

Roots a growing problem

Gardening is one of Australia's favourite past times, with a garden adding value to your property. There is nothing better on a hot summer day than the pleasant shade provided for your house by trees and shrubs in your garden.

Trees planted in the wrong place can be a problem in our urban areas, where sewer systems and drains can be blocked by water-seeking tree roots.

The roots of trees, such as poplars, have been found in pipes more than 30 meters away from the tree! These roots can do extensive damage to buildings, footpaths, fences as well as creating mayhem with our sewer system.



Trees in residential areas

Trees and shrubs have a place in residential areas by creating pleasant environments that provide shade during summer, create colourful landscapes, and screen out neighbours. Trees have many environmental benefits by providing habitat for native animals and insects, and also reduce salinity and soil erosion.

What we sometimes don't consider is the damaging effects tree and shrub root systems can have on nearby buildings and underground utilities. Drains, sewers and water mains can become disrupted, blocked and damaged, sometimes involving costly repairs and removal.

Wannon Water has produced this guide to assist you in choosing the appropriate planting location for some common tree and shrub species to help reduce damage and blockages to nearby pipes and structures. From a legal aspect, property owners generally have the right to plant any tree or shrub species in any location within their property. However, they become responsible for any adverse effects caused by their trees or shrubs to nearby buildings, footpaths, pipes, and other structures that may, or may not be within their property boundary.



Many kilometres of pipeline are damaged by tree roots each year.

What do root systems do?

Root systems supply the plant with water and nutrients, essential for the plant to survive and grow. Root systems continue to grow as the tree matures always searching for water and nutrient sources underground.

Root systems will often find old and cracked stormwater, sewage, and water mains, as these are perfect food sources. Roots will continue to grow inside these pipes causing blockages and leading to overflows and flooding. The extent of root systems varies between species. This flyer lists some of the species are suitable for planting near underground pipes.

Below Wannon Water has classified some commonly used plant species into three categories reflecting their suitability for planting in pipe reserves or easements.

** Please note these species are only an indication of the type of species that can be planted on pipe reserves or easements and may not be indigenous to your area. For further information regarding this list please contact your local Landcare group or Council

SPECIES 1

Scientific Name	Common Name
Arthropodium strictum	Chocolate Lily
Brachyscome multifida	Cut-leaf Daisy
Bulbine bulbosa	Bulbine lily
Carex appressa	Tall sedge
Chrysocephalum apiculatum	Common Everlasting
Dianella longifolia	Pale Flax-lily
Dichondra repens	Kidney Weed
Kennedia prostrata	Running Postman
Lomandra longifolia	Spiny-headed mat rush
Poa labillardieri	Common Tussock Grass
Stylidium graminifolium	Grass Trigger Plant
Themeda trianda	Kangaroo Grass

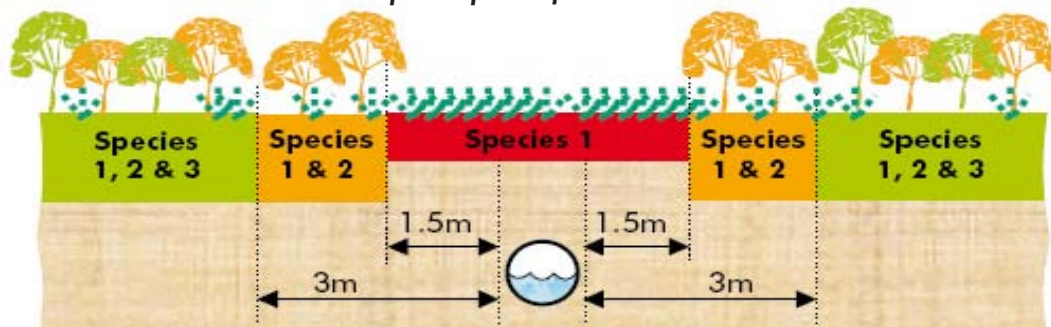
SPECIES 2

Scientific Name	Common Name
Acacia acinacea	Gold Dust Wattle
Correa glabra	Rock Correa
Correa reflexa	Common Correa
Daviesia leptophylla	Narrow leaf bitter-pea
Dilwynia glaberrima	Small leaf parrot-pea
Epacris impressa	Common Heath
Goodenia ovata	Hop Goodenia
Hakea ulcina	Furze Hakea
Hibbertia obtusifolia	Showy Guinea Flower
Hovea linearis	Common Hovea
Indigofera australis	Austral indigo
Olearia argophylla	Musky Daisy Bush
Ozothamnus obcordatus	Grey Everlasting
Pultenaea gunnii	Golden Bush Pea

SPECIES 3

Scientific Name	Common Name
Acacia myrtifolia	Myrtle Wattle
Acacia paradoxa	Hedge Wattle
Bursaria spinosa	Sweet Bursaria
Cassina arcuata	Drooping Cassina
Cassina aculeata	Dogwood
Coprosma quadrifida	Prickly Current-bush
Hakea nodosa	Yellow Hakea
Hymenanthera dentata	Tree Violet
Olearia lirata	Snow Daisy Bush
Ozothamnus ferrugineus	Tree Everlasting
Pultenaea daphnoides	Large-leaf Bush Pea
Solanum aviculare	Kangaroo Apple
Spyrideum parvifolium	Dusty Miller
Viminaria juncea	Golden Spray

Distance to plant species from drains and sewers



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