

Industry Notification: Sewer Isolation Plug Removal Requirements

South East Water is dedicated to upholding the highest standards of safety when working on our water and sewer assets.

This notification is supplementary to Technical Addendum 'SEW TA SEW-03-Revision 1, Isolation of Sewers and provision for future extension of Sewers' and provides clarification on the timing of live sewer plug removal, as well as reiterates the requirement for submitting a 'Register of plugs inserted'.

In the revised procedure, as part of 'Acceptance' process, isolation plugs must not be removed immediately after the satisfactory sewer testing works. Removal of isolation plugs will need be requested via a separate 'Form Q' after all 'audits' and 'system alerts' required for Acceptance of Works (AOW) are satisfactorily closed, and project is ready for AOW certificate.

Retaining the isolation plug in place beyond the sewer testing works ensures sewerage assets do not physically connect to the South East Water's network. This preserves network integrity and safeguards sewer assets delivered through the developer process from the potential of live network surcharges and harmful gases. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to address any rectification works identified during the AOW audit while the isolated sewer network is not connected to the live sewerage network.

The requirement to maintain and submit a 'Register of plugs inserted' for each project is currently stipulated in the Technical Addendum SEW TA SEW-03-Revision 1, Isolation of Sewers and provision for future extension. This requirement was incorporated to enforce compliance with Sewer Isolation requirements, ensuring isolation plugs inserted by accredited contractors are removed from the sewerage network as part of 'Acceptance' of the new works.

It should be noted, South East Water has been trialling the above changes over the past several months which has been well received by the development industry and seen as improving the level of safety for live sewer works.

Based on the above, effective 5 February 2024, the following revised procedure will apply to sewerage works on Live Sewers being delivered through the developer process. The changes will also be reflected in Manage Developer Works.

- 'Form Q for testing' is not to include the request for 'removal of isolation plugs' activity.
- Upon completion of AOW Verification by the accredited consultant, AOW Audits by South East Water, closure of associated issues, and satisfactory fulfilment of all administrative requirements for the project's AOW certificate, *a separate 'Form Q' to request 'removal of isolation plugs' is to be submitted.*
- A 'register of plugs inserted' is to be submitted with the 'Form Q' for 'removal of isolation plugs' activity under 'Live Sewer request documentation'.
- South East Water will oversee the Form Q's to ensure compliance and provide system acceptance.
- Isolation plugs are only to be removed after acceptance of 'Form Q' for 'removal of isolation plugs' by South East Water. Details of plug removal activity are to be entered in the respective 'Form Q' as per requirements.
- AOW certificate will be generated with the satisfactory completion of the 'Form Q' for 'removal of isolation plugs', provided South East Water administrative requirements have been met.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact:

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