6. Collect and recycle wastewater

What do customers want?

Customers recognise that removing wastewater is one of our main responsibilities. There is strong customer and stakeholder support for reducing both flooding and pollution incidents associated with wastewater. We aim to achieve this through innovative technologies and planned programmes of work to manage risks before they affect customers.

We have made two performance commitments about collecting and recycling wastewater and met one of these targets in year three.

What have we done?

Sewer collapses can cause blockages and other issues in the sewer, including pollution and unpleasant smells. Our target was that there should be no more than 14.29 sewer collapses per 1,000 kilometres of sewer. In year three we met this by achieving a rate of 14.13. Our positive performance on sewer collapses is a result of our investment programme, improved technical checks of each incident and an active approach to investigating problems on the sewer so that we can stop repeat events. This has helped us to identify collapses and other problems on the sewer network before they affect customers or the environment.

We also have performance targets which specify a maximum number of sewer blockages that should happen on our network. Monitors we have installed as part of our Dynamic Network Programme tell us when blockages are forming so we can send a dedicated blockage team to clear the blockage before customers need to contact us. To reduce the number of sewer blockages, we are continuing with increased sewer cleaning programmes and are seeing real benefits from customer campaigns such as 'stop the block'.

Our performance in year three was 20,203 blockages, meaning we did not meet our target of no more than 19,992 incidents. We have, though, seen an improvement every year of AMP7 as the strategies we have put in place continue to improve our performance.

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measures achieved