

Fencing And Storm Water Management Review

The installation of light steel fences or other fencing materials that do not allow air or water to freely move under or through the fence needs a review due to the potential for forming small dams of water which break through at the weakest point when the water pressure intensifies impacting dramatically on flash flooding.

To prevent the problem stated above the regulation of the structure of boundary fences needs either revising or monitoring for compliance; or perhaps both.

Relatively *newer fencing materials* may not have presented as being problematic in the past as in the situation occurring in Toowoomba on 10/11/2011 as the area had experienced a prolonged period of drought. Also the amount of rain that fell over a very short period of time really put a lot of these fences to the test. I have heard anecdotal reports of fences trapping large volumes of water in courtyard and backyards suddenly escaping, this would dramatically impact on the collecting volumes of water passing through Toowoomba and down the range through Murphy's Creek and Grantham and further afield.

Evidence of the above problem is that eleven out of twelve units were flooded at 31 Gladstone Street as a result of sudden explosions of water under a colorbond steel fence relieving the huge body of water that built up behind the fence. The worst effected unit received 60cm of muddy water, the least badly effected received approximately 10cm of water. The generous on site well maintained storm water inlets at 31 Gladstone Street, had been functioning excellently prior to the intrusion of water from the neighboring property at number 29. The water flowing through 31 Gladstone Street also entered the lower level of the property at 33 Gladstone Street. The storm water system at 31 Gladstone Street removed the water in what seemed to be well under 10 minutes as estimated by residents.

The problematic fencing described above could possibly be remedied by:

1. Ensuring a well maintained gap exists under fences,
2. Fences have gaps in their design to allow water and air to flow through them,
3. Ensuring adequate well maintained storm water drainage is maintained by property owners.

I ask for a review of relevant fencing by-laws and TRC's monitoring of these. Also a review of the management of storm water drainage on private, commercial and other properties.