

# New South Wales Fire Brigades Operations Bulletin 2010/03



## Large hydrant covers

### Issue

In some locations in the Greater Sydney Area, firefighters have found hydrants installed in 900x900 mm pits with large heavy covers (see Figure 1). These pits may be located on the road or on the footpath.

This Operations Bulletin gives instructions on use of these hydrants and reporting the presence of these covers.



Figure 1 - Large hydrant cover

### Background

Sydney Water advises that new or refurbished mains of 300 mm diameter or greater installed since 1995 may have an isolating valve installed next to a ball valve hydrant (see Figure 2). To allow easy access to the valves, Sydney Water installs them in 900x900 mm pits.

The hydrant covers are Gatic® brand and can only be opened using Gatic® lifters (see Figure 3). They cannot be opened with standard hydrant bars.



Figure 2 - Pit containing hydrant and isolating valve

### Hazards

The large hydrant covers:

- are very heavy, and
- must only be lifted with Gatic® lifters by personnel trained in their use.

Open pits are a hazard on an incident ground.

The difficulty and time involved in accessing these hydrants could delay firefighting operations.



Figure 3 - Gatic® lifters used to open covers

### Hydrants not to be used

When these hydrant covers are encountered at an incident, firefighters should source water from an alternative supply, such as a secondary main.

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### Rectification

The NSWFB's Structural Fire Safety Unit is working with Sydney Water to identify areas where these pits have been installed.

The NSWFB is recommending to Sydney Water that these pits be replaced with standard hydrants which the NSWFB can access. The decision on whether or not to replace hydrants rests with Sydney Water.

### Actions required

Stations serviced by Sydney Water are to conduct hydrant inspections on 300 mm mains. If any of these large hydrant covers are located, the following is to occur:

1. Conduct a risk assessment to determine if there is an alternate water supply and include this information in the relevant eIPs.
2. Develop contingency plans to source alternate water supplies in the event of a fire, eg by contacting Sydney Water to immediately attend the incident.
3. Email details of the locations of the large hydrant covers to the Structural Fire Safety Unit at [Firesafety.NSWFB@fire.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Firesafety.NSWFB@fire.nsw.gov.au) so they can forward the information to Sydney Water for action.

**Contact Officer:** Darren Bofinger, Fire Safety Officer, Structural Fire Safety Unit, (02) 9742 7400, [Firesafety.NSWFB@fire.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Firesafety.NSWFB@fire.nsw.gov.au).

	A	B	C	D	Other
<b>Noted Station Commander</b>					
<b>Checked Duty Commander</b>					

**Previous Operations Bulletin:** 2010/02, [Driving through flood waters](#).