



**septic ✓ safe**

PROTECT YOUR HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

# On-site Sewage Management Strategy

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Prepared by the Environment and Health Branch of the Environmental Standards Department

## Executive Summary

The New South Wales Government introduced the Local Government (Approvals) Amendment (Sewage Management) Regulation, 1998, in response to recognition that Septic systems across the State were found to pose a serious risk to health and the environment. As a part of these legislative changes Councils were to develop on-site sewage management strategies to identify how on-site sewage systems were to be managed in their area.

Council's On-site Sewage Management Strategy provides a framework for the installation and operation of on-site sewage management systems within its area. In addition the Strategy includes links to established processes for environmental assessment, statutory planning, service planning and community education.

The reforms to the Local Government (Approvals) Regulation 1999, did not fundamentally alter the powers or duties of Council's to regulate the installation and operation of on-site sewage management systems under Section 68 and Section 124 of the Local Government Act, 1993. The changes gave Councils additional regulatory tools that required system operators to obtain an operating approval for on-site sewage management systems from the local authority.

This Strategy provides the following:

- A Statement of objectives for on-site sewage management in the Fairfield Local Government Area.
- A Statement of the Performance Standards that the operation of all on-site sewage management systems must meet.
- Council's requirements for installation of new on-site sewage management facilities.

- Council's requirements for the operation of existing on-site sewage management systems.

It is anticipated that the adoption of a concerted effort to the administration of On-site Sewage Management Systems by Fairfield City Council and system operators, will result in a significant improvement in both the public health and the environment within the non-urban area.

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## Introduction

In March 1998, the NSW Minister for Local Government introduced The Local Government (Approvals) Amendments (Sewage Management) Regulation 1998, in response to septic tanks being recognised across the State as a significant source of pollution. Septic systems have been found through various studies as being installed in inappropriate areas and generally, without appropriate treatment, design or maintenance considerations. Consequently many of these systems present a risk to health and the environment.

The above Regulation has undergone a review and all relevant legislation is now contained within the Local Government (Approvals) Regulation, 1999.

The regulation and guidelines have clarified both Council's and land holders responsibilities to ensure long-term compliance with the specific performance standards outlined in this strategy.

The Regulation was implemented as a response to the studies throughout NSW, which indicated 90% of the 300,000 sewage management systems across the State were failing to adequately treat and dispose of wastewater. It is of further concern that this inadequate treatment of wastewaters has led to pollution of natural waterways and unhealthy conditions in the environment.

The then Minister for Local Government, Mr Ernie Page, stated in a press release that an inquiry into the operation of these systems indicated failure rates as high as 90%, posing potentially serious public health risks through contamination of neighbouring land and water.

In the non-urban residential zone, which includes Cecil Park and Horsley Park there are approximately 800 on-site sewage management systems. There have

been several different types of systems identified in this area; they include septic/trench absorption systems, modern aerated systems and some pan services.

Council has identified a small number of commercial and residential on-site sewage systems in the Lansvale area near the Liverpool Golf Club. Council has also identified a number of small commercial systems that have been approved and installed in the Horsley Park area, in recent years for use by local schools, community clubs and churches.

At the present Council receives approximately 25 new applications for Aerated Wastewater Treatment Systems (AWTS) each year. This number has increased significantly since the legislation was introduced in 1998.

## **Objectives**

The Council's objective in the regulation of on-site sewage management systems (OSMS's) is to work together with householders, developers and service agents to ensure that all on-site sewage management systems in Fairfield are installed and operated in a manner which ensures the following:-

- Prevention of risks to public health;
- Protection of surface and ground water resources;
- Protection of soils and vegetation;
- Maintenance and improvement of community amenity;
- Ecologically sustainable development; and
- Education of the local community in the operation and maintenance of their OSMS's.

## Performance Standards

The Council must prescribe performance standards when determining applications for the approval to install, construct, alter or operate sewage management systems. *The Local Government (Approvals) Regulation, 1999* specifies minimum standards as:

- The prevention of the spread of disease by micro-organisms,
- The prevention of the spread of foul odours,
- The prevention of the contamination of water,
- The prevention of the degradation of soil and vegetation,
- The discouragement of insects and vermin,
- Ensuring that persons do not come into contact with untreated sewage or effluent in the ordinary activities on the premises concerned,
- The minimisation of adverse impacts on the amenity of the premises and surrounding lands, and
- If appropriate, provision for the reuse of resources including nutrients, organic matter and water.

## How this Strategy is to be Read

The On-site Sewage Management Strategy has been divided into two parts:

- Part 1 relates to Council's requirements to install an on-site sewage management system.
- Part 2 relates to Council's requirements for monitoring of existing on-site sewage management systems.



## Relationships to Other Documents

This Strategy is to be read in conjunction with:-

- The Local Government Act, 1993 and the Local Government (Approvals) Regulation, 1999 (Under Section 68 of the Local Government Act, 1993 – Approvals).
- The Environment and Health Protection Guidelines for On-site Sewage Management for Single Households, 1998. Department of Local Government *et al* 1998
- On-site Sewage Management Risk Assessment System (2001). Department of Local Government
- The Draft Blue Print for the Lower Hawkesbury-Nepean River System (2002). Department of Land and Water Conservation, Local Government Advisory Group.
- Australian Standard / New Zealand Standard. 1547:2000 On-site Domestic-Wastewater Management. Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand.
- Australian Standard / New Zealand Standard 1546:1998 On-site Domestic Wastewater Treatment Units Part 1: Septic Tanks. Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand.
- Fairfield Development Control Plan No. 17/95 – Rural Area, Fairfield City Council.

## Land to which this Strategy Applies

This strategy applies to all existing and proposed on-site sewage management systems that are to be used for domestic and commercial purposes within the Fairfield City Council Local Government Area.

## Application of the Strategy

The requirements of this Strategy are largely based on requirements of the *Local Government (Approvals) Regulation 1999* (under Section 68 of the Local Government Act, 1993), "The Environment and Health Protection Guidelines: On-site Sewage Management for Single Households" and AS/NZS 1547:2000 On-site Domestic Wastewater Management.

Council will take the standards outlined in this Strategy into consideration in determining an application. Compliance with the provisions of the Strategy will not necessarily imply that Council will consent to an application or permit certain activities to prevail in terms of the ongoing operation of a system, but will give consideration to the merit of an application in the individual case.

For new system installations, an application shall be made on the prescribed form (Appendix 2) accompanied by details as prescribed in Section 1.2 of this Strategy and any associated fees as prescribed in Section 3 of this Strategy.

Proposals that step outside that which would be permitted by the NSW Health Department or the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) will not be considered. For systems developed by a NSW Health Department Accredited manufacturer, such as Aerated Wastewater Treatment Systems (AWTS) up to 10

persons, full compliance with manufacturer recommendations must be demonstrated.

Existing installations shall be subject to the same requirements as for new system installations, where an owner chooses to alter or construct a system, or where an alteration or modification is required due to inspections carried out by the Council.

## Education and Promotion

It is important that owners and operators of on-site sewage management systems understand how their system operates and the possible consequences of a faulty or poorly managed system. Older homes with on-site systems may have been bought and sold a number of times and the current owners may not know where the system is located.

Council has recognised that with the increasing development in the non-urban area, there are a large number of people moving onto properties that have never used or operated an on-site sewage system before. Therefore education will be essential to assist owners/occupants to better manage their onsite systems.

Council recognises its responsibility to provide appropriate information to owners and operators of on-site sewage management systems. Council has modified the Department of Local Government's *Easy Septic Guide* and distributed it to all residents with on-site sewage management systems. Copies of the guide will be distributed with all new approvals to install an OSMS.

## **PART 1 - REQUIREMENTS FOR THE INSTALLATION OF NEW ON-SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE**

- To ensure that the fundamental design of any proposed on-site sewage management system represents the best practice management for wastewater on the site over the expected life of the system.

Council's Rural Area Development Control Plan 1995, requires that all new developments must install a Department of Health Accredited on-site sewage management facility.

An activity approval pursuant to Section 68 of the Local Government Act, 1993, is to be lodged and approved by Council prior to the installation of the system. An On-site Waste Water Management Study will be required with all applications to install an on-site sewage management system.

### **1.0 Matters to Accompany Applications to Install or Construct Sewage Management Systems**

An application for approval to install, construct or alter a sewage management system (application refer to **Appendix 2**) on any premises included in the scope of this document must be accompanied by the documents specified below.

#### **1.0.1 Plan**

The application must be accompanied by a plan, drawn to scale, and showing the proposed location of:

- i. The sewage management system proposed to be installed or constructed on the premises, and
- ii. Any related effluent application areas, and

- iii. Any buildings or systems existing on, and any environmentally sensitive areas of, any land located within 100 metres of the sewage management system or effluent application areas.
- iv. The site plan shall show contours at 0.5m (RL) intervals across the site.

### **1.0.2 Specifications**

The application must be accompanied by manufacturers specifications for the on-site sewage management system to be installed or constructed on the premises concerned. Specifications shall include details such as pump sizes, air pump capacities and cross sectional details of the proposed system.

### **1.0.3 Site Assessment**

The application must be accompanied by details of the topography, soil composition and vegetation of any effluent application areas related to the sewage management system together with an assessment of the site in light of those details.

**NOTE:** Parts of the Western Sydney Region have been identified as having a soil salinity hazard according to the Draft Salinity Hazard Map (2000).

**As an emerging issue Council considers that all applications to install on-site sewage management systems in salinity hazard areas must take into consideration the impact of wastewater on soil and groundwater salinity.**

**A salinity assessment should be undertaken for the site, in accordance with the principles set out in the Western Sydney Draft Salinity Code of Practice (2002).**

#### 1.0.4 Statement

A statement of the following must accompany the application:

- i. The number of persons residing, or probable number of persons to reside, on the premises, and
- ii. Such other factors as are relevant to the capacity of the proposed sewage management system.

#### 1.0.5 Operation and Maintenance

The applicant is to provide in writing to Council within 21 days of the date of the Approval to install the following:

- i. The operation and maintenance requirements for the proposed sewage management system, and
- ii. The proposed operation, maintenance and servicing arrangements intended to meet those requirements, and
- iii. The action to be taken in the event of a breakdown in, or other interference with, its operation.

The requirements forming Section 1 (inclusive) of this document are also found as mandatory requirements in Clause 28 of *the Local Government (Approvals) Regulation, 1999*.

When submitting an application to Council for approval, applicants shall forward a minimum of three (3) copies of plans and specifications so as to allow a stamped and approved copy to be retained as:

- 1 copy for Council files,
- 1 copy for the applicant, and
- 1 copy for the owner of the property on which the system is installed

In order for an applicant to comply with Section 1.0.2 and 1.0.5 inclusive of this Strategy and also with Clause 28 of *the Local Government (Approvals) Regulation 1999*, the applicant shall provide Fairfield City Council with a full set of specifications, maintenance manuals and operating manuals for each type of system installed in the Council's area. Adherence to the above-mentioned will obviate the need for the provision of such detail on a repeat basis for each system installed.

#### **1.0.6 Certificate of Compliance**

At the completion of installation, construction or alteration of a system of sewage management, the system is not permitted to be commissioned until such time as the Council has received in writing, a Compliance Certificate certifying that the system has been installed, constructed or altered in accordance with the approval as issued by the Council.

#### **1.0.7 Other Systems**

Certain installations or portions of installations, which are unusual or large due to particular circumstances, may not be covered in detail by this Strategy. Applicants wishing to install systems that are not covered by this Strategy or who wish to install prototypes will need to supply a wastewater site report by a suitably qualified wastewater/geo-technical engineer. The report shall address

water balance, hydraulic loading, soil analysis and nutrient balance in addition full details of the system as required by Section 1.1.6 of this Strategy, are to be submitted.

Other systems include; "one off"/prototype, test model, a site-specific systems due to site peculiarities or small commercial systems under 2500 Equivalent Persons (EP) but greater than 11EP. Council will consider the merits of each case to determine if development should proceed, or if an alternative method of effluent disposal can be employed.

**NOTE: Council reserves the right not to approve prototype systems where the applicant is unable to demonstrate the system will meet minimum performance standards.**

## **1.1 DESIGN REQUIREMENTS**

### **1.1.1 Subdivisions**

Any proposal for subdivision shall be accompanied by a detailed report prepared by an appropriately qualified soil/hydraulic consultant. Such report shall assess site conditions at the subject property and report on its suitability for the disposal of effluent on each of the proposed allotments that make up the subdivision. Hydraulic loading, wet weather storage and a water and nutrient balance shall be included in the final calculations of the report.

Where a proposed subdivision includes an existing dwelling, the assessment will need to demonstrate that the subdivision will not result in a reduction for the dwelling to cope with wastewater management. If a proposed subdivision includes an existing dwelling and any part of the on-site sewage management system is on the newly created allotment a report is to be submitted for both allotments, the report will need to address the upgrading of the existing OSMS.



### 1.1.2 Evaluation Parameters

In evaluating a site, a partial or full assessment using the following parameters will need to be made. The general categories of information are:

### 1.1.3 Site Information

- Site Area (m<sup>2</sup>)
- Water Supply
- Wastewater Quantity (litres/day)

### 1.1.4 Site Assessment/Regional Setting

- Geology
- Climate
- Flood Potential
- Aspect of land application  
(N, S, E or W)
- Depth to Groundwater
- Site Drainage - any run-on or seepage
- Site Fill
- Erodibility
- Groundcover
- Site slope

**NOTE:** Climate data is to be obtained from the nearest Bureau of Meteorology Weather Station. Council considers Badgerys Creek Weather Station representative of the Cecil Park area and Prospect Dam Weather Station representative Horsley Park area.

### 1.1.5 Soil Assessment

- Soil structure
- Soil physical properties
- Permeability category
- Hydraulic loading recommended for soil absorption system (mm/day):
- Coarse fragments (%)
- pH

- Electrical conductivity (dS/m)
- Exchangeable sodium percentage
- Cation exchange capacity (cmol+/kg)
- Phosphorous sorption index
- Emerson Aggregate Test (EAT) (Dispersiveness)

#### **1.1.6 Land Application Area Calculations**

- Water balance
- Wet weather storage (where applicable)
- Recommendations and conclusion

#### **1.1.7 Evaluation Criteria**

The basic philosophy behind evaluating the suitability of a site for the on-site disposal of effluent is to initially identify the site area available for development and if on-site effluent disposal is a potential risk to public health and/or the environment.

The minimum area required for land application of effluent is 1600m<sup>2</sup> in total. This comprises of 800m<sup>2</sup> primary fixed irrigation and 800m<sup>2</sup> backup irrigation with a moveable line (a set of sample plans have been provided in Appendix 1).

Should an applicant wish to reduce the size of the irrigation area, it will be necessary to submit a wastewater site report to Council from a qualified soil/hydraulic consultant that supports the intent of the proposal.

Soil Texture	Soil Structure	Indicative Permeability (metres per day)
Gravels and sands	Structureless (massive)	>3.0
Sandy loam	Weakly pedal	>3.0
	Massive	1.4 - 3.0
Loam	High/moderate pedal	1.5 - 3.0
	Weakly pedal or massive	0.5 - 1.5
Clay loam	Highly pedal	0.5 - 1.5
	Moderately pedal	0.1 - 0.5
	Weakly pedal or massive	0.06 - 0.1
Light clay	Highly pedal	0.1 - 0.5
	Moderately pedal	0.06 - 0.1
	Weakly pedal or massive	<0.06
Medium to heavy clay	Highly pedal	0.06 - 0.5
	Moderately pedal	<0.06
	Weakly pedal	<0.06

Table 1. Shows indicative soil permeability based on soil texture and soil structure as described by Hazelton and Murphy 1992.

#### 1.1.8 Use of Flood Prone Land

No portion of the effluent treatment equipment (ie. treatment tanks, pumps etc.) is permitted to be below the 1% or 1:100 year flood level. No portion of the irrigation area or absorption or evapo-transpiration area is permitted to be located below the 5% or 1:20 year flood level, in accordance with the *Environment and Health Protection Guidelines: Onsite Sewage Management from Single Households*. Locating effluent disposal systems below the 1:20 flood level will lead to pollution of waterways in high rainfall periods.

Where there is potential for the land application area ie. evapo-transpiration beds, irrigation areas etc. to be inundated by surface water run-off from roads or other properties, bunding shall be used to direct the water around such areas. Strategically placed swales and the like shall be installed when so directed by Council so as to reduce the potential for contaminated water to leave the site.

### 1.1.9 Buffer Distances

Effluent disposal areas should be sited to maximise the amount of soil cover. Minimum set backs and buffer distances for a disposal area must be provided in accordance with the table below and identified on any plan provided with the site suitability report.

Spray irrigation systems should be surrounded by vegetated buffer zones and away from dwellings, site boundaries and public roads, in order to avoid nuisance or health problems. The effluent disposal area should not be used for recreational or food production purposes.

SYSTEM	BUFFER DISTANCES
All land Application Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ 100 metres to permanent surface waters (river, stream, lake etc.)</li> <li>☞ 250 metres to domestic groundwater well</li> <li>☞ 40 metres to other waters (farm dams, intermittent waterways and drainage channels)</li> </ul>
Surface Spray Irrigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ 6 metres if area up-gradient and 3 metres if area down-gradient of driveways and property boundaries</li> <li>☞ 15 metres to dwellings</li> <li>☞ 3 metres to paths and walkways</li> <li>☞ 6 metres to swimming pools</li> </ul>
Surface Drip and Trickle irrigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ 3 metres if area up-gradient and 3 metres if area down-gradient of swimming pools, property boundaries, driveways and buildings</li> </ul>
Sub-surface Irrigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ 6 metres if area up-gradient and 3 metres if area down-gradient of swimming pools, property boundaries, driveways and buildings</li> </ul>
Absorption System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ 12 metres if area up-gradient and 6 metres if area down-gradient of property boundary</li> <li>☞ 6 metres if area up-gradient and 3 metres if area down-gradient of swimming pools, driveways and buildings.</li> </ul>

## Table 2. Buffer Distances

(The buffer distances are provided by Table 5 pg66 of The Environment and Health Protection Guidelines for On-Site Sewage Management for Single Households.)

### **1.1.10 Topography and Slope**

Effluent irrigation areas must be as level as possible with an absolute maximum slope of 15%. For slopes between 10%-15% the utilisation of subsurface irrigation systems should be considered where site stability will not be compromised. The potential for erosion on the site must be assessed in terms of both stormwater run-off and wastewater.

### **1.1.11 Drainage and Landscaping**

Surface drainage patterns in the area should be addressed to ensure that the proposed treatment systems are sited to avoid inundation during wet weather. Where there is potential for the effluent disposal area (ie. Absorption trenches and irrigation areas) to be inundated by surface water run-off from roads or other properties, bunding is to be used to direct water around such areas.

Effluent disposal systems must distribute wastewater evenly within the designated effluent disposal area with any sub-surface pipes or trenches installed parallel to the contour. Consideration should be given to the ongoing maintenance of the disposal field.

Irrigation and buffer areas should be appropriately vegetated. Where possible plant selection for the effluent disposal area should employ the use of nutrient tolerant non-evasive plant species with year round growth potential. Any grasses or other plant species proposed to be introduced to the effluent disposal area must be specified in the report.

Details must be provided on any modifications to land and vegetation structure required for the installation or to achieve design performance of the effluent disposal system. The quantity, structure and use of any fill required as part of the proposal must be fully described within the report. A site plan (to scale) must also be provided, indicating all proposed landscaping works.

#### **1.1.12 AAA Water Saving/ Low Flow Devices**

The National Water Conservation Labelling Scheme indicates that the average family can save approximately 50 KL per year, by adopting AAA rated devices. Where any on-site sewage management system is provided, the following are required to reduce water consumption and the prevention of effluent disposal systems from failing:-

- Flow control devices are to be installed as an in-line fitting or as an end of line fitting at the following locations:-
  - a. Basin                      Hot and Cold 6 litres/minute
  - b. Kitchen sink              Hot and Cold 9 litres/minute
  - c. Laundry Tub              Hot and Cold 12 litres/minute
  - d. Shower                     Hot and Cold 9 to 12 litres/minute
  - e. Cistern                     5 litres/minute
  
- The installation of a 6 Litres per minute shower rose
- The installation of dual flush 3/6 litre pan and cistern
- The installation of a AAA rated dishwasher (not more than 18 Litres for each wash cycle)
- The installation of AAA rated washing machine (not more than 22 litres per dry kilogram of clothes).

## **PART 2 - REQUIREMENTS FOR THE OPERATION OF ON-SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS.**

### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES**

To ensure that the performance of any existing on-site sewage management system and related effluent disposal area achieve the following:

- Prevention of Risk to Public Health.
- Prevention of the degradation of soils and native vegetation on the property where the system is installed or on lands adjacent to that property.
- Ensure that effluent treatment and disposal is undertaken in a manner which does not adversely impact on the water quality of local watercourses and ground water systems.
- Prevention of any reduction in public amenity on the property where the system is installed or on lands adjacent to that property.

### **2.1 Operational Approval**

The Local Government (Approvals) Regulation, 1999 states that by July 1 1999, owners of On-site Sewage Management Systems are required to register with the relevant Council for Approval to Operate their system. This requirement extends to all on-site sewage management systems in NSW, both new and existing.

Dependent on the outcome of any inspection deemed necessary by Council a time limited and conditional Approval to Operate a Sewage Management System will be issued. The Regulation also provides for Council to charge application and inspection fees (specified in Section 2.3 of this Strategy).

The owner of any system operating after 30 June 1999, for which an application has not been submitted will be operating the system unlawfully. Under the provisions of Section 626(3) of the Local Government Act, 1993, it is an offence to install, construct, alter and to operate a system of sewage management without an approval from Council. A penalty applies for such an offence.

## 2.2 System Inspections

### 2.2.1 Domestic Systems

The Council may carry out inspections of any premises in relation to the operation of an on-site sewage management system in order to determine whether to issue an "Approval to Operate", assess compliance with an approval or in response to a complaint.

Inspections aim to ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken where a system is performing poorly. After an inspection is carried out a copy of the completed inspection report sheet will be forwarded to the owner and/or householder as appropriate.

Where a system failure is identified, one or more of the following actions will be taken by Council to ensure the protection of public health and safety:

- a) Provide advice and educational material to the system owner and/or operator as to the best practice in operating and maintaining the system;
- b) Order the owner to modify or upgrade a system incorporating on-site effluent disposal where site conditions are suitable.

If during an inspection it is identified that modification or upgrading works will be required, a report from a suitably qualified wastewater engineer will be required to be submitted to Council to investigate and design the most appropriate effluent disposal system given the site conditions. This requirement will be placed on all Notices and Orders served by Council.



Council will continue a risk based inspection program for all systems within the Fairfield City Council area. It is envisaged that as residents are educated and systems are upgraded the current risk classifications will be reduced to either medium or low.

### **2.2.2 Temporary Exemption for Purchasers of Land**

A person who purchases (or otherwise acquires) land on which an OSMS is installed may operate the system without approval for a period of three (3) months from the date the land is transferred.

If an application is sought within the first two (2) months from the transfer of the land the new owner may continue operate the system whilst the application is being determined.

### **2.2.3 Commercial Systems**

Council will inspect Commercial systems (those greater than 11EP and less than 2499EP) biannually to ensure that they are operating in accordance with their operating approval. Prevention Notices will be used to ensure that system owners are undertaking the following:

- Quarterly services of the treatment system;
- Regular effluent quality monitoring from the treatment system;
- Regular maintenance on the effluent disposal area.

## 2.3 Enforcement

There are several avenues available to Council to enforce the installation and operational requirements of this Strategy.

### 2.3.1 The Local Government Act 1993, and Regulations

The Act requires a person to obtain from Council, approval to operate a system of sewage management. Once Council has issued an approval it is an offence to operate the system of sewage management not in accordance with that approval {s.627(3)}.

The Department of Local Government has amended the Local Government (General) Amendment (Penalty Notice Offences) Regulation 2001 to give Councils the power to issue Penalty Infringement Notices for the following Offences:

- a) Operating a system of sewage management without prior Council approval {s.626(3)}; and
- b) Operating a system of sewage management otherwise than in accordance with the terms of an approval {s. 627(3)}.

This streamlined enforcement power will reduce the need for Councils to have matters heard in the Local Court. The penalty imposed when an infringement notice is issued is \$330. This is the same penalty imposed for non-compliance with Orders under Section 124 of the Local Government Act, 1993.

Under Section 124 of the Act, Council has the power to issue Orders to have failing systems repaired or replaced. The following Orders can be served:

- Order 15 Cease conducting an activity on a premises where the activity is or may constitute a threat to public health or safety.
- Order 21 Require action to maintain a premises in a healthy condition.
- Order 22 To control waste on premises where waste is not being dealt with satisfactorily.
- Order 30 Require compliance with an approval.

**NOTE:** Environmental Health Officers will ensure that all on-site sewage management systems operate so as not to give rise to any nuisance or have the potential to negatively impact on the environment or public health of the community.

Appropriate Orders are to be served and follow-up inspections are to be undertaken as a matter of priority. Emergency Orders shall be used in circumstances which the Council believes constitute a serious risk to health or safety or an emergency.

### **2.3.2 Protection Of The Environment Operations Act 1997 (POEO Act)**

The Act provides Local Government with increased powers, similar to the Environment Protection Authority, to investigate and issue legally binding notices. Council's are the Appropriate Regulatory Authority (ARA) for activities relating to on-site sewage management systems up to 2499 Equivalent Persons (EP).

Where a failing sewage management system is detected during the inspection and pollution is or is likely to occur, the following actions are available to Council under the POEO Act:

**Clean-up Notices** - Are quick responses to pollution incidents. An administration fee - currently set at \$320 will also be imposed for the issuing of this Notice.

**Prevention Notices** - Will be issued where a sewage management system is operating in an environmentally unsatisfactory manner. An administration fee - currently set at \$320 will be imposed for the issuing of this Notice.

**Penalty Infringement Notices** - may be issued where a pollution incident is observed to be occurring.

If Council spends excess time and money monitoring the required actions, a compliance cost notice may be issued, to recover all costs for environment protection activities.

Following the expiration of the above Notices and the works have not been satisfactorily completed, a Penalty Infringement Notice (PIN) under the Act may be issued or further legal proceedings through the Courts, or Civil proceedings through the Land and Environment Court may be instigated.

## **2.4 On-site Sewage Management Fee Structure**

All fees and charges are in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges Policy.

**NOTE:** These costs may change in the future with as a part of Council's budgetary process.

### **2.4.1 New systems**

Council currently charges the following fees in relation to the installation of new on-site sewage management systems.

Application fee	\$120
Inspection fee	\$100 (2 inspections)

This current structure incorporates the first twelve months annual approval to operate. Once the twelve months have expired an application for approval to operate must be lodged with Council.

#### 2.4.2 Existing Systems

The registration of the systems shall attract a fee of \$30. An inspection of the property and an audit of service records, particularly, for aerated and pump-out systems will be conducted following registration of the OSMS. Inspections shall attract a fee of \$80.

<b>Risk Based Fee Structure</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Low Risk</b>	<b>Medium Risk</b>	<b>High Risk</b>
1	\$110	\$110	\$110
2	\$30	\$30	\$110
3	\$30	\$30	\$110
4	\$30	\$110	\$110
5	\$30	\$30	\$110
6	\$110	\$30	\$110

Commercial systems will be inspected biannually, an inspection fee of \$160 will be charged per inspection of these systems.

## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1 - Sample Site Plans**

**Appendix 2 - Application to Install/modify On-site Sewage Management Facility**

**Appendix 3 - Application for Approval to Operate On-site Sewage Management System**



<b>OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	
APPLICATION TO INSTALL NO:	_____
PROPERTY NO:	_____
DA NO:	_____ (If applicable)
RECEIPT NO:	_____
<b>FEES:</b>	<b>APPLICATION/INSPECTION \$220</b>

## APPLICATION TO INSTALL ON-SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Local Government (Approvals) Regulation, 1999

The undersigned, hereby makes application for the approval of Council in respect of plans and specifications for the proposed installation of an On-site sewage management system and hereby agree to comply with all the requirements and conditions written and printed herein and any supplementary conditions that may be stated on the plans and specifications upon their return. Please ensure all information is provided in accordance with the checklist on the reverse page.

**NOTE:** Council's On-site Sewage Management Strategy Adopted 25 June 2002, allows all types of on-site sewage management systems to be installed. An On-site Wastewater Report must accompany all applications to install on-site sewage management system.

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### Type of Onsite Sewage Management System

- Septic Tank/Site Disposal
- Septic Tank Pump-out Service
- Aerated Wastewater Treatment System
- Wet/Dry Composting Toilet and Greywater System
- Commercial Wastewater Treatment System
- Research/Other System \_\_\_\_\_

---

### SUBJECT LAND:

LOT: \_\_\_\_\_ DP: \_\_\_\_\_ STREET NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET: \_\_\_\_\_

SUBURB: \_\_\_\_\_

---

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Type of Premises	Fittings to be connected	Number of persons	No. of Bedrooms in dwelling	Tank Capacity Litres	Collection wells Litres
<input type="checkbox"/> Dwelling	<input type="checkbox"/> W.C				
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Bath				
<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundry				
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen				

---

**APPLICANT:**

Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**INSTALLATION FIRM AND PLUMBER:**

Installation firm: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Licence No: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Plumber: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Licence No: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**CONSENT OF ALL OWNERS**Full name of Owner/s: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

OWNER'S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Please refer to the attached checklist to ensure that you have provided all the information required by Council to assess your application.

If you require any assistance in filling out the details requested on this form please contact Council's Community Health Section on 9725 0327.





Administration Centre  
Avoca Road, Wakeley 2176  
PO Box 21, Fairfield 1860

Telephone: (02) 9725 0222  
Fax: (02) 9757 4708

## APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO OPERATE AN ONSITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Local Government (Approvals) Regulation, 1999

For the Period from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

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### SUBJECT LAND:

Owners Name: <MERGE>

Owners Address: <MERGE>

Address: Lot <MERGE> DP <MERGE> No. <MERGE>

Street <MERGE>

Suburb <MERGE>

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### Onsite Sewage System type

<MERGE>

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### Have the owner's details changed since the last application?

**YES** Please fill out the details below and sign the application

**NO** Please sign the application

**Is the Property being rented?** YES  NO

\* Place a tick in the appropriate box

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### OWNER:

As the owner/s of this property, I hereby make application to Council for Annual Approval to Operate an Onsite sewage management system (septic tank). I agree to comply with all the requirements and conditions that may be imposed by Council.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact No. Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**ON SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS  
APPROVAL CHECKLIST**



This checklist has been designed to assist people who are installing new aerated on-site sewage management systems (OSMS). Under the Local Government (Approvals) Regulation, 1999, and Fairfield City Council's On-Site Sewage Management Strategy, you are required to provide the following information in order for Council to be able to accurately assess your application:

- 1) **Site plan to scale.** It is to include contours, any existing proposed dwelling or structures, the location of the On Site Detention Basin, the sewage management system, related effluent disposal areas, any environmentally sensitive areas such as creeks or water bodies and any related drainage lines.
- 2) **Specifications.** Full specifications of the sewage management system should be provided and may be obtained from the company who is installing the system.
- 3) **Operation and maintenance.** Details such as the operation and maintenance requirements of the facility, servicing arrangements and proposed action in the case of a breakdown of operation.
- 4) A statement is to be provided specifying the number of persons or probable number of persons residing at the premises and the capacity of the proposed system.

Irrigation areas are required to include the following in accordance with Council's On-Site Sewage Management Strategy.

- 1) Irrigation areas are to be no less than 2 x 800m<sup>2</sup> making a total irrigation area of 1 600m<sup>2</sup>.
- 2) Irrigation areas are to have at least 6 sprinklers, 3 per 800m<sup>2</sup> on a moveable irrigation line.
- 3) A diversion valve or rotor valve is to be provided to the irrigation line between the effluent disposal areas to allow for alternate use of the disposal areas.
- 4) The effluent disposal areas are to be prepared or terraced or landscaped or turfed prior to commissioning of the on-site sewage management system to the satisfaction of Council.
- 5) A sign is to be provided on the effluent disposal areas in a conspicuous place stating "**RECLAIMED EFFLUENT, NOT FOR DRINKING, AVOID CONTACT**". The sign is to have a green background with black or white lettering at least 20mm in height.

All new aerated on-site sewage management systems are required to have the following setback distances in accordance with Fairfield City Council's On-site Sewage Management Strategy where applicable.

- 1) Septic tanks are required to be at least <sup>15</sup> metres from a dwelling.
- 2) The irrigation area is to be at least 3 metres from a ~~dwelling or~~ property boundary in circumstances where the ~~dwelling or~~ property boundary is on a higher elevation to the irrigation area.
- 3) The irrigation area is to be at least 6 metres from a ~~dwelling or~~ property boundary in circumstances where the ~~dwelling or~~ property boundary is on a lower elevation to the irrigation area.
- 4) Irrigation areas are to be separated by a distance of at least 3 metres.
- 5) Irrigation areas are to be at least 10 metres from any swimming pool or spa.
- 6) Irrigation areas are to be at least 100 metres from any permanent watercourse such as a creek or river, and at least 40 metres from any other water bodies such as dams, drainage channels and intermittent waterways.

**NOTE:** Each application is assessed on an individual basis (topography, soil type, existing land-use etc), Council may request further information where required. If you require any further information regarding your septic system please contact Council's Community Health Branch on 9725-0808.

APRIL 2001