

Septic Tanks & On-Site Sewage Management



On-Site Sewage Management

Council has developed an **On-Site Sewage Management Plan** to help effectively manage domestic sewage and wastewater throughout the region. It aims to prevent risk to public health and minimise the impact of on-site sewage management facilities on the environment. Together with the NSW Department of Local Government's "**The Easy Septic Guide**", these documents provide guidelines for the selection, design, siting, construction, operation and maintenance of on-site sewage management facilities.

Registration & Approval of New/Existing On-Site Sewage Management Systems

Before installing a septic tank (or on-site sewage management system), you must first obtain approval from Council. This can be done either in conjunction with a development application for a new dwelling (or other development) if submitting one at the time, or on a separate Section 68 application form if installing an on-site sewage management system only. Please refer to **3.6 Application for Approval** of Council's **On-Site Sewage Management Plan** for details on what plans and specifications are required to accompany your application.

If you live on a property that already has a septic tank (or on-site sewage management system), please ensure that it is registered with Council and has approval to operate. This is a requirement under the *Local Government Act 1993* and there are penalties of up to \$2,200 for failure to comply. You can check whether or not your system has approval by contacting your local council office. If required, registration can be made using a Section 68 application form available at your nearest local council office or by downloading a copy from our website – www.midwestern.nsw.gov.au.

Which Septic System is Right for You?

There are various septic systems around and it's worth speaking with an environmental health officer at your local council or a septic system specialist before making a decision on what to buy. Factors that will influence which system you install include:

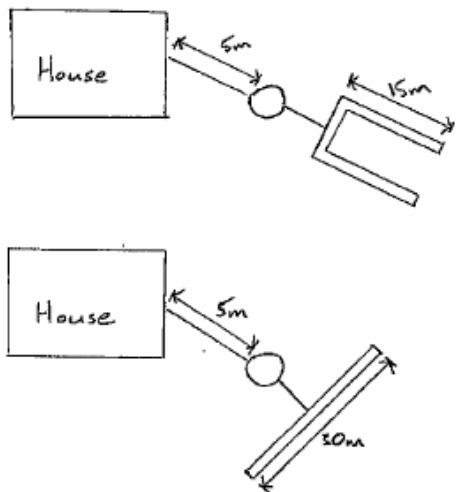
- **Where the system will be located** – soil type, the slope of the ground, available area for dispersal, proximity to bodies of water, etc;
- **What the system will be used for** – waste from toilets only with separate grey-water facilities or for all waste-water, whether or not the intention is to use treated waste-water for any form of irrigation, etc;
- **Who will use the system** – how many people is the residence capable of housing, how often is the premises occupied, etc.;
- **Water supply** – is the residence connected to reticulated water, tank-water, bore-water, etc.

The most commonly used setup in Australia is the basic septic tank and trench system. This can be expanded to include things like sand filters, wetland treatment areas, and evapotranspiration beds instead of the trench(es) where soil conditions make trenches less suitable.

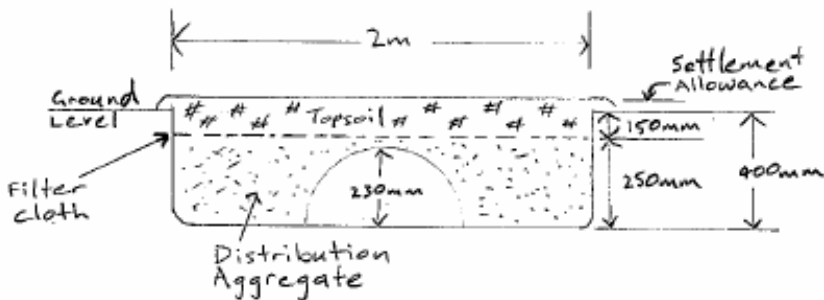
There are also Aerated Wastewater Treatment Systems where a second tank treats the effluent further through aeration and the use of chlorination or ultra-violet light before being pumped to an irrigation area. These systems are required to have a strict quarterly servicing contract and need to be closely monitored and maintained.

Composting systems, both wet and waterless, are becoming increasingly popular and there are many models available on the market. As with any on-site sewage management system, it is important to make sure that what you purchase is accredited by the NSW Department of Health.

For more information on which system will meet your needs you can refer to "**The Easy Septic Guide**" or speak with qualified plumber/septic system specialist or an environmental health officer at your local council office.



Examples of layouts for basic septic tank & trench systems



Cross-section of a conventional trench

Legislation & Guidelines

- **Mid-Western Regional Council's On-Site Sewage Management Plan** – Available from your nearest local Council office or from our website – www.midwestern.nsw.gov.au
- **NSW Department of Local Government's "The Easy Septic Guide"** – this can be accessed from their website or inquire after a copy from your local council office.
 Website: www.dlg.nsw.gov.au
 Phone: (02) 4428 4100
- **Environment & Health Protection Guidelines "On-site Sewage Management for Single Households"** - Issued by Department of Local Government, Environment Protection Authority, NSW Health, NSW Department of Land & Water Conservation and the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning.
 Website: www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/Files/Information/onsite.pdf
 Phone: (02) 4428 4100
- **NSW Legislation**
 Website: www.legislation.nsw.gov.au
 Phone: 93213333
- **Public Health Unit**
 Website: www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth

Dubbo Office
 PO Box 739
 Dubbo NSW 2830
 Ph: (02) 6841 5569
 Fax: (02) 6841 5571

Council Offices:

86 Market Street MUDGEE
 109 Herbert Street GULGONG
 77 Louee Street RYLSTONE

PO BOX 156
 MUDGEE NSW 2850

Ph: 1300 765 002 or (02) 6378 2850
 Fax: (02) 6378 2815
 email: council@midwestern.nsw.gov.au

