

Onsite Domestic Wastewater Management

The draft State Environment Protection Policy (Waters) aims to prevent domestic wastewater polluting surface waters and impacting groundwater.

Domestic wastewater management planning

On-site domestic wastewater systems are designed to treat and contain all waste within a property's boundary. A septic tank is the most common type of onsite system. Local councils must develop domestic waste management plans (DWMPs) in consultation with water corporations and communities.

The draft SEPP (Waters) confirms councils' responsibilities including:

- identifying and addressing potentially polluting onsite wastewater systems;
- reviewing and implementing DWMPs for septic tank management;
- reporting back to communities about the plan's implementation.

When councils are approving subdivision planning, they must consider how the wastewater will be managed and ensure services are provided for before subdivision is approved.

People who have a septic tank must follow the rules to ensure the tank doesn't pollute the environment.

The draft SEPP (Waters) confirms that water corporations' responsibilities include:

- working with councils to develop the DWMP; and
- responding to councils' domestic waste management plan.

If sewerage services are available and septic tank systems cannot contain the waste onsite, the owner of the property must connect to the sewerage system, or

the water corporation may connect the property to the sewerage system in line with the *Water Act 1989*.

Processes to support onsite septic tanks

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) propose to support implementation by:

- Setting up a local government/water corporation working group to scope the revision of the current code;
- Updating Victorian Planning Provisions 'Particular Provisions' clause 56.07 -3;
- Working with local government to support onsite domestic wastewater management.

The draft SEPP (Waters) Implementation Plan proposes that DELWP and EPA will work with local government to:

- Investigate the feasibility of a Land Capability Assessment provider's accreditation system (to ensure the standard of LCA);
- Work with water corporations and councils to find solutions when sewerage is unavailable;
- Secure funding to help local government plan domestic wastewater management;
- Develop materials to inform community members about septic tank management.

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