

## Septic Tank & Aerobic Treatment Unit (ATU) Fact Sheet

Regardless of the type of property, any wastewater produced will need to be disposed of in an approved manner. Disposing of wastewater other than rainwater in a stormwater drain is not permitted.

For most properties this will mean connecting to the Water Corporation's reticulated sewerage system. In areas where reticulated sewerage is not available, onsite effluent disposal is required. To see if a property is connected, or can be connected to sewer, please contact the [Water Corporation](#) on 13 13 95.



If sewer is not available an approval to install an onsite effluent disposal system will be required. To obtain approval an application must be lodged with the Shire's Health Services which will then be assessed and subject to approval conditions. The application should be to scale and detail the setbacks from buildings, boundaries, watercourse, and other structures.

### Setbacks

#### Septics:

##### Tanks:

- 1.2m from any boundary, edge of house pad, building, retaining wall or footings.

##### Leach Drains:

- 1.8m boundary, septic tank, edge of house pad, buildings, footings, or house pad
- 30m from Bore, well or watercourse
- 6m from open drainage channel
- 1.2m from trafficable or paved area
- Covered with 150mm to 300mm of clean sand fill free from clay.
- Leach drains 3m apart if installed parallel

#### ATU:

##### Tanks:

- 1.2m from boundaries or buildings
- 1.8m from irrigation area
- 6m from watercourse

##### Irrigation must be:

- 1.8m from open fencing
- 1.8m from paved surfaces
- 3m from upslope buildings
- 3m from swimming pool on flat ground or upslope and 6m from swimming pool upslope.
- 30m from well, bores, dams, and watercourses
- In general, minimum irrigation area- 150m<sup>2</sup> (or subject to Council approval)

### Dealing with Problems from Wastewater

**Water Corporation:** If the problem is with the Water Corporation's sewer you can contact them on 13 13 75 to report the fault.

**Private Property:** If the problem lies with the property's plumbing (on site disposal system or prior to sewer connection point) then the owner is responsible for undertaking repairs. They should engage the services of a licenced plumber to undertake any repairs.

**Old Onsite Disposal Systems:** Onsite effluent disposal systems will not function forever. Over time the soil surrounding the leach drains becomes clogged and saturated with fats which prevent it draining properly. If you have an old system which is not draining correctly, your leach drains may need rejuvenating. To do this

the existing soil surrounding the leach drains is removed and disposed of and new clean soil reinstated. Approval for this work is not required by the Shire unless the actual leach drains are going to be replaced.

### Decommissioning existing systems

To decommission an apparatus, you must:

Have the septic tanks emptied by a Licensed Liquid Waste Contractor and disposed of at an approved site.

and either

- Remove the septic tanks, leach drains or soak wells from site and backfill with clean compacted sand (this option is recommended particularly if property development is planned in the future).

or

- Remove the septic tank, leach drain or soak well lids and ensure the bottom of the septic tanks are broken up. Backfill the septic tanks, leach drains and soak wells with clean compacted sand.

Unfortunately, once a system has been decommissioned it can be difficult to prove this fact. Therefore, owners are encouraged to retain copies of any receipts and where possible take photos of the decommissioning work being undertaken for future reference.