

These guidelines have been developed from the recommendations by NSW Health. The guidelines provide information on the decommissioning and reuse of septic tanks, collection wells and aerated wastewater treatment systems (AWTS). The guidelines produced by the NSW Health have been slightly modified and adopted by Wollondilly Shire Council and are predominantly for those premises that will be connecting to any approved sewerage scheme.

THE REUSE OF SEPTIC TANKS, COLLECTION WELLS AND AWTS IS PRIMARILY FOR THE STORAGE OF WATER THAT IS TO BE USED FOR THE WATERING OF GARDENS AND LAWNS.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE SEPTIC TANKS, COLLECTION WELLS AND AERATED WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS TO BE REUSED AS VESSELS FOR HOLDING WATER FOR DOMESTIC (WASHING AND DRINKING) PURPOSES.

Where it is feasible to reuse a septic tank there are several precautions that need to be observed to ensure there is no danger to health.

The reuse or removal of a septic tank, collection well or AWTS shall only be carried out if another approved method of effluent disposal is available and connected to the premises concerned.

To ensure that the existing septic tank, collection well or AWTS does not pose a risk to health, one of the following methods should be followed:

Option 1: REMAINING ON SITE AND NOT TO BE REUSED

1.1 The contents are to be removed by pumpout tanker and documentation is to be submitted to Council verifying that the tank has been pumped out by an approved contractor.

1.2 The sides of the tank should be hosed down as the tanker is removing the contents.

1.3 The tank is to be disinfected by broadcasting builders (hydrated) lime over the exposed surfaces.

1.4 Several holes should be punched into the bottom of the tank. The lid and those parts of the walls above the ground should be demolished and collapsed into the tank. The tank should then be filled with clean soil.



Option 2: REUSED ON SITE AS A STORMWATER STORAGE TANK FOR WATERING THE GARDEN (IRRIGATION)

2.1 For reuse on site as an irrigation tank, the contents are to be removed by a pumpout tanker and documentation is to be submitted to Council verifying that the tank has been pumped out by an approved contractor.

2.2 The sides of the tank should be hosed down as the tanker is removing the contents.

2.3 The tank is to be mosquito proofed.

2.4 The tank should be filled with fresh water and disinfected to a minimum level of 5mg/L of free residual chlorine with a half hour contact time.

2.5 The tank is to be labelled as containing water unfit for human consumption.

2.6 Non-standard water fittings or irrigation fittings are to be used and no cross connection is to be made with any potable (drinking) supply.

Option 3: REMOVED AND RELOCATED

3.1 The contents are to be removed by a pumpout tanker and documentation is to be submitted to Council verifying that the tank has been pumped out by an approved contractor.

3.2 The sides of the tank should be hosed down as the tanker is removing the contents.

3.3 The tank should then be filled with clean water and disinfected to a minimum level of 5mg/L of free residual chlorine, with a one half hour contact time.

3.4 The tank may then be emptied and removed.

3.5 Approval from the Council is to be obtained where the tank is to be reinstalled at another site within the Shire. Council can only grant approval for the installation of tanks and AWTS that have a current accreditation certificate issued by the NSW Health Department.

3.6 All tanks and in particular those of reinforced concrete may only be removed where the structural integrity of the tank can be maintained. Only tanks certified as complying with AS1547 - 2012 shall be reused as septic tanks.

3.7 If the tank is to be removed, relocated and reused as an irrigation tank, the tank is still to be emptied, cleaned and disinfected as outlined above.

3.8 The irrigation lines are to be disinfected by flushing with clean water containing at least 5mg/L of free residual chlorine. Should the irrigation lines be connected to the reticulated supply, an approved backflow prevention device is to be installed and approved by the water supply authority.

3.9 The approval conditions for a new installation as required by Council are applicable.



Further Information:

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/domesticwastewater/>

or contact Wollondilly Shire Council:

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Office hours:	8.00am – 4:00pm
Phone enquiries:	8.00am – 4.30pm

For emergency enquiries please call the above number 24 hours

Administration Centre

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