

PE3 - Onsite Sewage Management Policy – Proposed Amendments

PE3

Onsite Sewage Management Policy – Proposed Amendments

258293

TRIM 1956

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The purpose of this report is to seek a resolution from Council to exhibit alterations to the On-Site Sewage Management System & Greywater Reuse Policy (PLA0033).
- The Policy aims to provide consistent approach in the assessment and approval process of on-site sewage management systems.
- Under legislation, a person who makes a relevant planning application or public submission is required to disclose any reportable political donations. The disclosure requirement extends to any person with a financial interest in the application or any associate of the person making a public submission. No disclosure of political donation has been made in association with this application.
- It is recommended that the draft On-Site Sewage Management System & Greywater Reuse Policy be placed on public exhibition for consideration of any submissions prior to adoption of the Policy.

REPORT

Council's "Onsite Sewage Management Policy" (PLA 0033) was adopted in May 2011. The Policy outlines the design criteria to achieve sustainable on-site sewage management practices within the Shire. The Policy serves to inform assessment officers and residents as to the criteria, relevant legislation and guidelines for the design and installation of suitable systems.

Whilst the Policy does not include any new requirements it has been significantly rewritten in accordance with Council's Plain English initiative. The revised document now flows in a more consistent format and so it is easier for residents to understand and use.

CONSULTATION

The Policy was rewritten in accordance with comments by an external Auditor. Consultation has also been undertaken with the Manager Compliance, Manager Development and relevant State Agency. The document was circulated to Council's assessment team for review with appropriate comments included in the Draft Policy.

It is recommended that the community be consulted by placing the Draft Policy on public exhibition and forwarding it to neighbouring Councils, Wastewater Consultants and other key stakeholders seeking comments for consideration prior to it being adopted by Council.

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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This matter has no financial impact on Council's adopted budget or forward estimates.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Summary of proposed Changes Table - TRIM 1956#175
2. Draft Onsite Sewage Management Policy - TRIM 1956#170
3. Draft Onsite Sewage Management Strategy - TRIM 1956#173

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Draft On-Site Sewage Management System & Greywater Reuse Policy be exhibited for a minimum of 28 days.
2. That a further report be presented to Council detailing the outcomes of the community consultation exercise.

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Policy Changes table for Council Reports:

SUMMARY OF CHANGES – ON-SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT AND GREYWATER REUSE POLICY

Location	Previous Wording	New Wording	Reasoning
Policy Objectives	<p>The objective of this policy is to outline the framework to best ensure that on-site sewage management facilities are installed, operated and maintained correctly to meet all appropriate performance objectives and legislative requirements.</p> <p>This policy aims to provide a consistent approach in the assessment and approval process of on-site sewage management facilities.</p> <p>The policy also aims to provide the community with the necessary information to make an informed decision as to the most suitable method of effluent disposal for each particular site.</p>	<p>The purpose of this policy is to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a consistent approach in the assessment and approval process of on-site sewage management systems. Ensure that new on-site sewage management systems are only installed on sites that are suitable for effluent disposal. Provide information to the community so they can make an informed decision on the most suitable method of effluent disposal for each particular site. 	<p>Included additional reasoning for the document and removed some wording to read more concisely</p>
Background	<p>The Wollondilly Local Government Area has one of the highest number of on-site sewage management facilities within New South Wales. A large proportion of the Shire is also designated water catchment area, subject to the provisions of the Drinking Water Catchment State Environmental Planning Policy (2011). Many residential, commercial and industrial premises rely on wastewater treatment and effluent disposal via various methods including aerated wastewater treatment systems (AWTS), septic tanks, wet or waterless composting systems, pumpout systems, absorption beds or trenches and irrigation for effluent disposal. Greywater treatment and diversion systems may also be implemented.</p> <p>It is Council's responsibility to determine whether proposed on-site sewage management facilities are suitable for the site where they are to be installed. In order to make an informed assessment as to the suitability of a proposed system</p>	<p>The Wollondilly Local Government Area has one of the highest number of on-site sewage management systems within New South Wales. There are currently over 5000 systems, with this number increasing as more development occurs in the rural and semi-rural areas. Sydney Water Corporation provides and manages the reticulated sewer system within Wollondilly Shire. This sewer system is available to most smaller lots within the towns and villages of the Shire. Areas where the sewer is unavailable are generally larger lots on the fringes of these towns, semi-rural and rural areas, the villages of Menangle, Yanderra, Nattai and Mount Hunter and isolated streets where Sydney Water's sewer has not been provided.</p> <p>A large part of the Shire lies within the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment, with the region being the main source of water for Sydney. As such, it is important that we protect our</p>	<p>Reworded for ease of reading, to reflect different legislation, and provide a more informative introduction. Removal of guidelines and standards list as this is provided in the related documents section.</p>

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Location	Previous Wording	New Wording	Reasoning
	<p>for a particular site, certain performance criteria and requirements are to be satisfied prior to the approval for the installation and operation of the system.</p> <p>Prior to approving any sewage management facility, consideration must be given to various standards and guidelines (including updated reviews of these) such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Australian Standard AS/NZS 1547:2000 On-site domestic wastewater management -The Department of Local Government's Environment and Health Protection Guidelines – On-Site Sewage Management for Single Households 2001 -The NSW Guidelines for Greywater Reuse in Sewered, Single Household Residential Premises produced by the former Department of Water and Energy (DWE) -NSW Health Domestic Greywater Treatment System Accreditation Guidelines (February 2005) -The Sydney Catchment Authority's Water Quality Information Requirements (2010). 	<p>waterways from potential pollution from effluent disposal. To do this, Council must manage and monitor the cumulative environmental impacts and reduce the risk of failing or inadequately designed on-site sewage management systems.</p> <p>It is Council's responsibility to determine whether proposed on-site sewage management systems are suitable for the site where they are to be installed. This policy outlines the design criteria to achieve sustainable on-site sewage management practices within the Shire. In order to make an informed assessment as to the suitability of a proposed system the following design criteria must be demonstrated prior to Council approving the systems installation.</p>	
Applicability	<p>Land To Which This Policy Applies</p> <p>This Policy applies to ALL land not served by a reticulated sewerage system in the Wollondilly Local Government Area.</p> <p>This Policy applies to ALL proposed subdivisions and rezonings within the Wollondilly Local Government Area.</p>	<p>This Policy applies to all developments not serviced by a reticulated sewerage system in the Wollondilly Local Government Area.</p> <p>This Policy applies to all proposed unsewered land within the Wollondilly Local Government Area.</p>	<p>Minor rewording to cover all unsewered areas.</p>
Guidelines	<p>This Policy lays down a framework that will ensure that new on-site sewage management facilities are only installed on sites that are deemed suitable for the type of disposal proposed. The policy aims to provide a consistent approach to the assessment of new systems and will provide a mechanism to inform the</p>	<p>Domestic On-site Sewage Management</p> <p>4.1 The installation and operation of any new on-site sewage management system requires an approval. For approval to be granted, the owner of the property must apply</p>	<p>Condensed and rewritten to flow in a more sequential order for ease of reading,</p>

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	<p>community of Council's requirements for their installation. The policy has been developed to achieve the goal of ensuring that on-site sewage management facilities, through proper planning, installation and management, will provide a safe and effective method of effluent disposal.</p> <p>Each existing on-site sewage management facility must be appropriate for long term use on the site and meet the following performance objectives contained in the policy:</p> <p>prevention of public health risk – ensuring that persons do not come into contact with untreated sewage or effluent (whether treated or not) in their ordinary activities on the premises concerned; the prevention of the spread of disease by micro-organisms;</p> <p>protection of waters - on-site sewage management systems should be selected, sited, designed, constructed, operated & maintained so that waters (surface & ground) are not contaminated by any flow from treatment systems or effluent disposal areas;</p> <p>conservation & reuse of resources – if appropriate, provision for the re-use of resources (including nutrients, organic matter & water);</p> <p>protection of community amenity – the prevention of the spread of foul odours; the prevention of degradation of soil & vegetation; the discouragement of insects & vermin; & the minimisation of any adverse impacts on the amenity of the premises & surrounding lands.</p> <p>The performance standards in this Policy have been developed to minimise any adverse impact on the environment and community members. In order to achieve this, all new applications to install an on-site sewage management facility will be assessed on their merits with consideration given to:</p> <p>4.3.1 the nature and scale of the</p>	<p>to Council.</p> <p>4.2 All applications to install or alter on-site sewage management systems shall include-</p> <p>A site plan with the following -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The location of the effluent disposal area(s) with amount of land available. •The location of the sewage management system. •The location of all current and/or proposed buildings. •All property boundaries, driveways, gardens, paved areas etc. •Distances to any environmentally sensitive areas e.g. rivers, creeks, bores, drainage depressions, farm dams etc. <p>Details of the sewage management system proposed to be installed.</p> <p>Certificates of Accreditation from Department of Health for the system to be installed.</p> <p>Floor plans clearly showing the number of bedrooms in the dwelling and any other habitable rooms that may be used or converted into a bedroom.</p> <p>4.3 All new domestic applications are classified into categories determined by the amount of suitable effluent disposable area available. The categories determine the type of effluent management permissible. Each category varies in terms of the potential risk of installing an on-site sewage management system on that site and require different amounts of information to be submitted with the application to install.</p> <p>Please note - The suitable effluent disposal area does not include buffer distances, these must be provided in accordance with Section 4.8 of this policy.</p> <p>All systems will be classified into one of the three categories shown below:</p>	<p>greater depth and in accordance with plain English guidelines</p>

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	development;		
	4.3.2 the site characteristics and suitability;	Category 1 - Lots with 1500 m2 or more of suitable effluent disposal area	
	4.3.3 protection of surface waters;	Category 2 - Lots with between 300 m2 and 1500m2 of suitable effluent disposal area	
	4.3.4 protection of ground waters;		
	4.3.5 protection of land & natural vegetation;	Category 3 - Lots with less than 300 m2 of suitable effluent disposal area	
	4.3.6 prevention of any public health risk;	4.4 Category 1 - Lots with 1500 m2 or more of suitable effluent disposal area:	
	4.3.7 enhancing community amenity;		
	4.3.8 ensuring conservation & reuse of water;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Surface irrigation with a movable line is permissible. •Effluent disposal areas of this size are expected to be able to satisfactorily cope with domestic wastewater loads of up to 10 persons. •Only a minimum site assessment is required for sites in this category where an Aerated Wastewater Treatment System (AWTS) is proposed. A more detailed report may be requested by Council if considered necessary. 	
	4.3.9 achieving ecologically sustainable development.		
	4.4 An application to install or construct a sewage management facility on any land must be accompanied by a Wastewater Report, prepared by a suitably qualified wastewater consultant or geotechnical engineer, consistent with the guidelines and documents listed in section 2.3. This will allow Council to assess the suitability of each site for the proposed system. The report must consider the nature of the proposed development, on-site wastewater treatment system, wastewater load and an evaluation of the site and soil constraints.	<p>A detailed wastewater report prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced wastewater consultant outlining how the system will comply with the relevant legislation and guidelines is required if –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The land is located within the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment. •Sub-soil disposal systems (i.e. trenches, beds, mounds, etc.) are proposed. •Alternate systems such as biological filter systems, greywater treatment systems, or wet and waterless composting system are proposed. •The land is located on a steep slope (more than 10%) 	
	4.5 Where located in the designated drinking water catchments, the Wastewater Report must address the SCA's Water Quality Information Requirements (2010), demonstrating that the proposed development will have a neutral or beneficial effect on water quality. See: http://www.sca.nsw.gov.au/publications/publications/developments-in-sydneys-drinking-water-catchments-water-quality-information-requirements .	4.5 Category 2 - Lots with between 300 m2 and 1500m2 of suitable effluent disposal area:	
	4.6 A site plan drawn to an appropriate scale must be submitted with		

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	<p>all applications and show the location of the following:</p> <p>4.6.1 The on-site sewage management facility proposed to be installed or constructed on the premises. This includes all tanks, equipment and related effluent disposal areas.</p> <p>4.6.2 The location of the proposed or existing development and the amount of land potentially available for effluent disposal must also be indicated.</p> <p>4.6.3 All property boundaries.</p> <p>4.6.4 Driveways, gardens, vegetation, paved areas or facilities existing on or proposed, and any sensitive areas of any land that has the potential to affect or be affected by the proposed facility.</p> <p>4.6.5 Any buildings or facilities existing on, and any environmentally sensitive areas of any land located within 100 metres of the sewage management facility or effluent disposal areas.</p> <p>4.6.6 Buffer distances to relevant features (refer to table in Section 4.16).</p> <p>4.6.7 The orientation and slope of the effluent disposal area and its surrounding area.</p> <p>4.6.8 North point.</p> <p>4.7 The following information is to be provided in relation to the specifications of the proposed on-site sewage management facility:</p> <p>4.7.1 Full specifications of the on-site sewage management facility to be installed are to be submitted with all applications. The specifications, including manufacturer and model number, are to be legible and clear. They must also be of a standard that permits a person to be able to identify all parts of a system including the location of components and their use.</p> <p>4.7.2 A plan and section view of the on-</p>	<p>•Only sub-surface irrigation is permissible.</p> <p>•A detailed wastewater report prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced wastewater consultant detailing how the system will comply with the relevant legislation and guidelines must be submitted.</p> <p>4.6 Category 3 - Lots with less than 300 m2 of suitable effluent disposal area:</p> <p>•Only pump-out systems are permissible.</p> <p>•A greywater treatment system may be installed; a detailed wastewater report is required for the installation of these systems.</p> <p>4.7 Potential Bedrooms</p> <p>For domestic systems the design daily flow calculations are based on the number of potential bedrooms, the following table is used –</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Design Wastewater loading for each potential bedroom</th> <th>Reticulated/Bore Water</th> <th>Tank Water</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1-2 potential bedrooms</td> <td>600 L/d</td> <td>400L/d</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 potential bedrooms</td> <td>900 L/d</td> <td>600 L/d</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 potential bedrooms</td> <td>1200L/d</td> <td>800L/d</td> </tr> <tr> <td>More than 4 potential bedrooms</td> <td>1200L/d plus 150 L/d for each additional bedroom</td> <td>800L/d plus 100L/d for each additional bedroom</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Note - Council maintains the discretion to classify studies and other rooms that have the potential to be used as sleeping rooms as bedrooms. Council will assess each application based on its merits.</p> <p>4.8 Buffer Distances</p> <p>The following buffer distances apply to all categories unless otherwise specified:</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>All land application Systems</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 metres to permanent surface waters (e.g. river, streams lakes etc.) • 250 metres to domestic groundwater well • 40 metres to other waters (e.g. farm dams, intermittent waterways & drainage channels etc.) </td> </tr> <tr> <td>AWTS surface spray irrigation</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down gradient of stream & unsewered boundaries • 15 metres to dwellings • 3 metres to paths & walkways • 6 metres to swimming pools </td> </tr> <tr> <td>AWTS surface drip & trickle irrigation</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down gradient of swimming pools, property boundaries, driveways & buildings </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Subsurface Irrigation</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down-gradient of swimming pools, property boundaries, driveways & buildings </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Absorption systems</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 metres if area up-gradient & 8 metres if area down-gradient of property boundary • 8 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down-gradient of swimming pools, driveways & buildings </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Market Gardens</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AWTS only permitted with 20 metres if area up-gradient & 10 metres if area down gradient of any market garden </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Design Wastewater loading for each potential bedroom	Reticulated/Bore Water	Tank Water	1-2 potential bedrooms	600 L/d	400L/d	3 potential bedrooms	900 L/d	600 L/d	4 potential bedrooms	1200L/d	800L/d	More than 4 potential bedrooms	1200L/d plus 150 L/d for each additional bedroom	800L/d plus 100L/d for each additional bedroom	All land application Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 metres to permanent surface waters (e.g. river, streams lakes etc.) • 250 metres to domestic groundwater well • 40 metres to other waters (e.g. farm dams, intermittent waterways & drainage channels etc.) 	AWTS surface spray irrigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down gradient of stream & unsewered boundaries • 15 metres to dwellings • 3 metres to paths & walkways • 6 metres to swimming pools 	AWTS surface drip & trickle irrigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down gradient of swimming pools, property boundaries, driveways & buildings 	Subsurface Irrigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down-gradient of swimming pools, property boundaries, driveways & buildings 	Absorption systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 metres if area up-gradient & 8 metres if area down-gradient of property boundary • 8 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down-gradient of swimming pools, driveways & buildings 	Market Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AWTS only permitted with 20 metres if area up-gradient & 10 metres if area down gradient of any market garden 	
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	<p>site proposed sewage management facility is also required.</p> <p>4.8 An application to install or construct an on-site sewage management facility must be accompanied by a copy of the current certificate of accreditation issued by the Director-General of the NSW Department of Health for the proposed system.</p> <p>4.9 For domestic systems, a statement is to be submitted with all applications indicating that the design wastewater load was determined by the number of potential bedrooms on the premises and shall include any other factors relevant to the capacity of the proposed on-site sewage management facility and the fixtures to be installed in the associated dwelling, building or structure. For commercial, industrial and other forms of development, the design wastewater load should be based on design allowances from AS/NZS 1547:2000 On-site domestic wastewater management and/or NSW Health's Septic tank and collection well accreditation guideline (2001).</p> <p>4.10 All applications shall include the operation and maintenance requirements for the proposed on-site sewage management facility including servicing arrangements and the action to be taken in the event of a breakdown, or other interference with its operation.</p> <p>4.11 Each proposed new on-site sewage management facility will need to be classified into one of three categories at the planning stage. The amount of suitable (ie. usable) effluent disposal area will determine which of the three categories the system will be classified under. The dimensions of suitable effluent disposal areas must be supplied and clearly delineated on a site plan at the application stage. Each category has different requirements regarding the amount of information that is to be submitted at the application stage. The categories will also determine the type of system which will be permitted on a particular site.</p>	<p>4.9 Residential Systems with more than 10 people and Commercial Systems</p> <p>Any on-site sewage system not used for domestic purposes or that is expected to receive an equivalent daily wastewater volume between 10 EP and 2500 EP is typically regarded as a commercial sewage management system, or a package wastewater treatment plant.</p> <p>These systems are to be designed by a suitably qualified and experienced wastewater consultant. Individual design, water quality details and calculation of peak flow and average flow rates must be submitted to Council as part of the application. Effluent disposal areas are required to be calculated in accordance with these flow rates.</p> <p>Typically industrial premises are required to install a pump out system due to the high level of chemical and physical contaminants.</p> <p>Miscellaneous requirements</p> <p>4.10 The requirements of this policy become applicable where property owners propose dwelling alterations or additions that increase the number of potential bedrooms or the existing effluent disposal area has been reduced.</p> <p>4.11 Wastewater reports prepared for subdivision applications must evaluate wastewater irrigation areas for a minimum of a 5 bedroom dwelling.</p> <p>4.12 Effluent pump-out should not be used to enable inappropriate or unsustainable development. Pump out systems will only be considered for existing unsewered building entitlements where a sustainable on-site sewage management option is not viable.</p>	

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	<p>All systems will be classified into one of the three categories shown below:</p> <p>Category 1 - Lots with 1500 m2 or more of suitable effluent disposal area</p> <p>Category 2 - Lots with between 300 m2 and 1500m2 of suitable effluent disposal area</p> <p>Category 3 - Lots with less than 300 m2 of suitable effluent disposal area</p> <p>4.12 The three categories have different requirements in regards to the level of information required to be submitted with each application. This is due to the fact that each category varies in terms of the potential risk as a result of installing an on-site sewage management facility and subsequently the level of assessment required will vary.</p> <p>4.13 Category 1 - Lots with 1500 m2 or more of suitable effluent disposal area:</p> <p>4.13.1 Wet weather storage is not required for this category. A land application area of this size is expected to be able to satisfactorily cope with domestic land application rates.</p> <p>4.13.2 Only a minimum site assessment is required for sites in this category where an Aerated Wastewater Treatment System (AWTS) is proposed. A basic Wastewater Report prepared by a suitably qualified wastewater consultant or geotechnical engineer is to be submitted outlining (a) soil texture and (b) depth to groundwater or bedrock (as determined by bore hole testing). A more detailed report may be requested by Council if considered necessary.</p> <p>4.13.3 A detailed Wastewater Report prepared in accordance with AS/NZS 1547:2000 will be required for all sub-soil disposal systems (ie. trenches, beds, mounds, etc) and alternate disposal systems such as biological filter systems, wet and waterless composting systems,</p>	<p>4.13 Grey water diversion devices require the submission of a wastewater report in all unsewered area. If the property is connected to sewer a grey water device that has a WaterMark licence and is listed by NSW Health can be installed without Council approval.</p> <p>4.14 At the completion of installation, construction or alteration of a system, the system is not permitted to be operated until such time as the Council has issued an 'Approval to Operate'. To obtain an Approval to Operate a Notice of Works, Certificate of Compliance and Sewer Service diagram must be submitted to Council. Failure to obtain an Approval to Operate and comply with the conditions of the Approval is an offence and may result in prosecution.</p> <p>4.15 It is a requirement that all AWTS are serviced on a regular basis and that an ongoing contract is maintained with a person who has appropriate qualifications and experience in monitoring, inspecting, servicing and maintenance.</p>	

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	<p>etc. A detailed report is also required for systems to be located in landslip and flood-prone areas.</p> <p>4.13.4 If located within the drinking water catchment, a detailed Wastewater Report is to be submitted for referral to the SCA.</p> <p>4.13.5 Buffer distances apply to the effluent disposal area (see Section 4.16).</p> <p>4.14 Category 2 - Lots with between 300 m2 and 1500m2 of suitable effluent disposal area:</p> <p>4.14.1 Only subsurface irrigation where an AWTS is proposed is to be installed on sites in this category. This is to reduce runoff from disposal areas and reduce the risk of exposing residents to the effluent.</p> <p>4.14.2 A detailed Wastewater Report is required to allow Council to assess the suitability of a site for effluent disposal. Sites in this category have smaller land application areas, and subsequently a detailed evaluation is more crucial to determine the suitability of these sites.</p> <p>4.14.3 A minimum of four star WELS rated water saving devices must be installed to reduce the amount of effluent generated, and increase sustainability of the effluent disposal area, also reducing the cost to the householder.</p> <p>4.14.4 Buffer distances apply to the land application area (see Section 4.16).</p> <p>4.14.5 If located within the drinking water catchment, a detailed Wastewater Report is to be submitted for referral to the SCA.</p> <p>4.14.6 A reserve effluent disposal area may be required if deemed necessary by the Wastewater Report.</p> <p>4.14.7 The Wastewater Report shall be prepared by a suitably qualified Wastewater Consultant or Geotechnical Engineer and should include (but shall not be limited to) details of:</p>		

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	<p>Site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> └ climate (including rainfall, frost, etc.); └ flood potential; └ exposure of site; └ slope of site; └ landforms; └ run-off, seepage potential and run-on; └ erosion potential; └ site drainage; └ fill └ buffer distances (refer to Section 4.16); └ land area; └ rock outcrops; └ geology; └ vegetation cover. <p>Soil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> └ soil profile (soil texture and soil structure); └ soil permeability based on soil profile information; └ depth to bedrock or C horizon, up to at least 1 metre where possible; └ depth to water-table if possible or if the information is available; └ course fragments; └ bulk density based on soil profile information; └ pH; └ electrical conductivity; └ sodicity; └ cation exchange capacity; └ phosphorus sorption capacity. <p>4.15 Category 3 - Lots with less than 300 m2 of suitable effluent disposal area:</p> <p>4.15.1 Only pump-out systems will be permissible on lots within this category. Less than 300 m2 of land application area would likely lead to run-off of effluent and create potential health risks.</p> <p>4.15.2 The site assessment for this category would only relate to the actual property details and to the actual installation of the pump-out tanks.</p> <p>4.15.3 A minimum of four star WELS rated water saving devices must be</p>		

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	<p>installed to reduce the amount of effluent generated, and increase sustainability of the effluent disposal area, also reducing the cost to the householder.</p> <p>4.13.4 A domestic greywater treatment system (DGTS) accredited by the NSW Department of Health may be installed to allow reuse for toilet flushing, laundry use, etc. A Wastewater Report prepared by a suitably qualified Wastewater Consultant or Geotechnical Engineer will be required for all proposed DGTS.</p> <p>4.16 Buffer distances are required to minimise the risk of contamination to the environment and the community from effluent disposal areas. It should be noted that land designated as a buffer can not be used for effluent disposal. The SCA's Wastewater Effluent Model (WEM) may require greater buffer distances based on modelled outcomes in the designated drinking water catchment area.</p> <p>The following buffer distances will apply to all categories unless otherwise specified:</p> <p>All land application Systems • 100 metres to permanent surface waters (e.g. river, streams lakes etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250 metres to domestic groundwater well • 40 metres to other waters (e.g. farm dams, intermittent waterways & drainage channels etc) <p>AWTS surface spray irrigation •</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down-gradient of driveways & property boundaries • 15 metres to dwellings • 3 metres to paths & walkways • 6 metres to swimming pools <p>AWTS surface drip & trickle irrigation•</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down gradient of swimming pools, property boundaries, driveways & buildings <p>Subsurface irrigation • 6 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down-gradient of swimming pools, property boundaries, driveways & buildings</p>		

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Location	Previous Wording	New Wording	Reasoning
	<p>Absorption systems • 12 metres if area up-gradient & 6 metres if area down-gradient of property boundary</p> <p>• 6 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down-gradient of swimming pools, driveways & buildings.</p> <p>4.17 Greywater diversion can be achieved via gravity or pump to a sub-surface or sub-soil irrigation system and will generally require the prior approval of Council however in sewerred areas, greywater diversion devices (GDD) are permitted to be installed and operated without Council approval provided:</p> <p>4.17.1 It is carried out in accordance with the Plumbing and Drainage Code of Practice;</p> <p>4.17.2 An on-site sewage management facility is not installed and operating on the property concerned;</p> <p>4.17.3 Certain performance standards related to health and the environment are met;</p> <p>4.17.4 Council is satisfied that the property concerned is not located in an area registered as environmentally sensitive; and</p> <p>4.17.5 The greywater diversion device has a Watermark or Plumbing Safety Licence.</p> <p>4.18 Any development proposal that involves on-going land disposal of treated greywater (or diverted greywater in the case of unsewerred areas) will require a wastewater report that assesses land suitability, the sizing of management areas, the identification of buffers (to drainage depressions, watercourses, sensitive environments, property boundaries, dwellings etc.) for land disposal and other constraints.</p> <p>4.19 Domestic greywater treatment systems are designed to collect, store, treat and possibly disinfect greywater to the standards specified in the NSW Health Domestic Greywater Treatment System Accreditation Guidelines (February 2005). Where treated wastewater is not disinfected, it may only be utilised via an adequately designed</p>		

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Location	Previous Wording	New Wording	Reasoning
	<p>sub-surface or sub-soil irrigation land application system. A domestic greywater treatment system requires a certificate of accreditation from NSW Health which must be submitted to Council with the application to install a sewage management facility and a detailed Wastewater Report. If located within the drinking water catchment, the application and Wastewater Report will be referred to the SCA for assessment.</p> <p>4.20 Manually bucketed greywater may be reused for irrigation of gardens, lawns and pot plants provided the greywater is not heavily contaminated and is not allowed to run-off onto adjoining properties or into any stormwater drainage systems. Greywater is not to be manually bucketed during wet weather.</p> <p>4.21 Typically only pump-out systems are permitted for commercial and industrial premises due to the high level of chemical and physical contaminants although on-site sewage management facilities may be considered by Council however such systems will be subject to a more detailed assessment than domestic on-site sewage management facilities.</p> <p>4.22 Section 68 Part C (6) of the Local Government Act 1993 stipulates that approval is to be obtained from Council to operate a system of sewage management for both new and existing facilities. Failure to obtain an "Approval to Operate" and to comply with the conditions of the approval is an offence and may result in prosecution.</p> <p>4.23 Where property owners propose dwelling alterations, additions, or the erection of other property improvements such as swimming pools or detached garages, the requirements of this Policy becomes applicable to the consideration of the application submitted to Council. In this regard the existing effluent disposal area cannot be compromised or reduced and may require augmentation.</p>		

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Location	Previous Wording	New Wording	Reasoning
	4.24 Proposals for dwelling alterations or additions, or the erection of other property improvements, such as swimming pools, detached garages etc, are required to be accompanied by a Wastewater Report as set out in Category 2 of this policy.		
Responsibility/Accountability	Manager – Compliance Team Leader – Compliance Team Leader – Building Senior Environmental Health Officer Environmental Assessment Officers – Building All staff providing information to the community in relation to on-site sewage management.	Manager – Compliance Manager – Development Team Leader – Compliance Team Leader – Building Assessment Senior Environmental Health Officer Senior Building Surveyors Building Surveyors Assistant Building Surveyors All staff providing information to the community in relation to on-site sewage management.	Includes new roles or titles
Related Documents	Nil	This Policy is in accordance with the following - 6.1.1 <i>Designing and Installing On-site Wastewater Systems</i> , Sydney Catchment Authority (2012) 6.1.2 <i>On-site Sewage Management Strategy</i> , Wollondilly Shire Council (2016) 6.1.3 The Australian/New Zealand Standard AS1547:2012 On-Site Domestic Wastewater Management 6.1.4 <i>Environment and Health Protection Guidelines: On-site sewage management for single households</i> New South Wales Department of Local Government (1998) (aka 'Silver Book') 6.1.5 <i>Neutral or Beneficial Effect on Water Quality Assessment Guideline (NorBE)</i> , Sydney Catchment Authority, (2011). 6.1.6 <i>NSW Guidelines for Greywater Reuse in Sewered, Single Household Residential Premises</i> , New South Wales Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability (2008) 6.1.7 <i>Water Sensitive Design Guide for Rural Residential Subdivisions</i> Sydney Catchment Authority (2011) 6.1.8 <i>Environmental Guidelines – Use of Effluent by Irrigation</i> , NSW Department of Environment & Conservation (2004)	Included new documents relevant today's standards and removed this list from the introduction

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Location	Previous Wording	New Wording	Reasoning
		6.1.9 <i>Septic Tank and Collection Well Accreditation Guidelines</i> , NSW Health (2001). 6.1.10 The Wollondilly Development Control Plan 2016	
Related legislation	8.1 Section 68 Part C of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) 8.2 Part 2 Divisions 4 & 5 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 (NSW)	This policy is to be read in conjunction with – <i>The Local Government Act 1993;</i> <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2005;</i> <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979;</i> <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000;</i> <i>Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011;</i> <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997;</i> <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Drinking Water Catchment) 2011.</i>	Included more comprehensive list of legislative acts
Resources	Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 (NSW) Environment and Health Protection Guidelines – On-Site Sewage Management for Single Households Standard AS/NZS 1547: 2000 "On-site domestic wastewater management" Drinking Water Catchment State Environmental Planning Policy (2011) Sydney Catchment Authority - Water Quality Information Requirements (2010) Sydney Catchment Authority – Design and Installation of on-site wastewater systems manual (2011) NSW Guidelines for Greywater Reuse in Sewered, Single Household Residential Premises Wollondilly Shire Council's On-site Sewage Management Strategy	Sydney Catchment Authority – Design and Installation of On-site Wastewater Systems Manual (2012) Environment and Health Protection Guidelines – On-Site Sewage Management for Single Households Standard AS/NZS 1547:2012 "On-site Domestic Wastewater Management"	The provided documents are the documents all of the guidelines are based on.
Definitions	DEFINITIONS absorption - uptake of liquid into the soil aerated wastewater treatment system (AWTS): a wastewater treatment	DEFINITIONS Aerated wastewater treatment system (AWTS): An aerated waste water treatment system treats all household waste water and involves	Changed to reflect wording and most important definitions

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Location	Previous Wording	New Wording	Reasoning
	<p>process typically involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ settling of solids and flotation of scum ▪ oxidation and consumption of organic matter through aeration ▪ clarification - secondary settling of solids, and ▪ disinfection of wastewater before surface irrigation. <p>cation exchange capacity (CEC): a measure of the ability of a soil to attract and hold cations by electrical attraction; three important plant nutrients are the cations calcium (Ca₂₊), magnesium (Mg₂₊) and potassium (K⁺)</p> <p>disinfection: a process that destroys, inactivates or removes pathogenic micro-organisms</p> <p>domestic wastewater: wastewater arising from household activities, including wastewater from bathrooms, kitchens and laundries</p> <p>effluent: any waste products (treated or untreated) from any process or human activity that is discharged into the environment,</p> <p>effluent disposal area (EDA): the primary disposal area for an on-site sewage management facility.</p> <p>electrical conductivity (EC): an electrical measure of the concentration of salts in solution; the salts that occur in significant amounts in domestic wastewater are the chlorides, sulphates and bicarbonates of sodium, potassium, calcium and magnesium; in water these salts dissociate into charged ions and the EC of the solution is proportional to the concentration of these ions. The units of EC are deciSiemens per metre (dS/m) at 25°C</p> <p>greywater: (sullage) domestic wastewater, excluding toilet waste</p> <p>greywater diversion device: A device that diverts greywater generated by a household for subsurface irrigation</p>	<p>the settling of solids, oxidation and consumption of organic matter, clarification of solids and disinfection using chlorination prior to irrigation.</p> <p>Buffer Distance: A distance measured in metres that represent the length of separation between an effluent disposal area and features like property boundaries, buildings, driveways, swimming pools and water courses.</p> <p>Effluent: Liquid discharge from a septic tank or aerated waste water treatment system.</p> <p>Effluent disposal area: the area designated for the disposal water from on-site sewage management systems.</p> <p>Groundwater: all underground waters</p> <p>On-site Sewage Management System (OSSM): any facility that stores, treats and/or disposes of sewage and/or waste water on-site.</p> <p>Run-off: rain water and/or irrigated effluent that becomes surface flow because it is not immediately absorbed into the soil</p> <p>Run-on: surface water flowing on to an irrigation area as a result of run-off occurring higher up the slope</p> <p>Septic tank: wastewater treatment device that provides a primary treatment of wastewater, where solids settle at the bottom, oils and fats float to the top and liquid passes through the system.</p> <p>Sewage: waste matter which passes through sewers. Sewage includes any effluent of a kind referred to in paragraph (a) of the definition of waste in the Local Government Act.</p> <p>Sewage management: any activity carried out for the purpose of holding or processing, or reusing or otherwise</p>	<p>relevant to the document</p>

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Location	Previous Wording	New Wording	Reasoning
	<p>reuse.</p> <p>groundwater: all underground waters</p> <p>nutrients: chemical elements that are essential for sustained plant or animal growth; the major nutrients essential for plant growth are nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium; in excess, nitrogen and phosphorus are potentially serious pollutants encouraging nuisance growths of algae and aquatic plants in waters and (in the case of nitrate) posing a direct human health risk</p> <p>pathogens: micro-organisms that are potentially disease-causing; these include but are not limited to bacteria, protozoa and viruses</p> <p>permeability: the general term used to describe the rate of water movement through a soil</p> <p>pH: a measure of hydrogen ion concentration. It is an indicator of acidity or alkalinity and ranges from 0 - 14, where 0 is the most acid, 14 the most alkaline, and 7 neutral</p> <p>run-off: the part of the precipitation and/or irrigated effluent that becomes surface flow because it is not immediately absorbed into or detained on the soil</p> <p>run-on: surface water flowing on to an irrigation area as a result of run-off occurring higher up the slope</p> <p>septic tank: wastewater treatment device that provides a preliminary form of treatment for wastewater, comprising sedimentation of settleable solids, flotation of oils and fats, and anaerobic digestion of sludge</p> <p>sewage: waste matter which passes through sewers. Sewage includes any effluent of a kind referred to in paragraph (a) of the definition of waste in the Local Government Act.</p>	<p>disposing of, sewage or by-products of sewage.</p> <p>Soil absorption trench: Trenches are constructed below ground surface, from 300 to 900mm deep, and usually consist of a durable self supporting arch, gravel or sand.</p> <p>Sub-surface Irrigation: effluent dripper system with irrigation lines buried 100mm below the ground surface.</p> <p>Suitable effluent disposal area – An area of land specifically designated for the application of effluent, this land complies with all buffer distances, slopes and all other criteria to allow wastewater disposal.</p> <p>Wastewater: water that contains waste wastewater arising from household activities, including wastewater from bathrooms, kitchens and laundries, which includes sewage and greywater.</p>	

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Location	Previous Wording	New Wording	Reasoning
	<p>sewage management: any activity carried out for the purpose of holding or processing, or reusing or otherwise disposing of, sewage or by-products of sewage.</p> <p>wastewater: water that contains waste from residential, industrial or commercial premises which includes sewage and greywater.</p>		

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On-site Sewage Management and Greywater Re-use Policy

1. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to:
- Provide a consistent approach in the assessment and approval process of on-site sewage management systems.
 - Ensure that new on-site sewage management systems are only installed on sites that are suitable for effluent disposal.
 - Provide information to the community so they can make an informed decision on the most suitable method of effluent disposal for each particular site.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Wollondilly Local Government Area has one of the highest number of on-site sewage management systems within New South Wales. There are currently over 5000 systems, with this number increasing as more development occurs in the rural and semi-rural areas. Sydney Water Corporation provides and manages the reticulated sewer system within Wollondilly Shire. This sewer system is available to most smaller lots within the towns and villages of the Shire. Areas where the sewer is unavailable are generally larger lots on the fringes of these towns, semi-rural and rural areas, the villages of Menangle, Yanderra, Nattai and Mount Hunter and isolated streets where Sydney Water's sewer has not been provided.

A large part of the Shire lies within the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment, with the region being the main source of water for Sydney. As such, it is important that we protect our waterways from potential pollution from effluent disposal. To do this, Council must manage and monitor the cumulative environmental impacts and reduce the risk of failing or inadequately designed on-site sewage management systems.

It is Council's responsibility to determine whether proposed on-site sewage management systems are suitable for the site where they are to be installed. This policy outlines the design criteria to achieve sustainable on-site sewage management practices within the Shire. In order to make an informed assessment as to the suitability of a proposed system the following design criteria must be demonstrated prior to Council approving the systems installation.

3. APPLICABILITY

- 3.1 This Policy applies to all developments not serviced by a reticulated sewerage system in the Wollondilly Local Government Area.
- 3.2 This Policy applies to all unsewered land within the Wollondilly Local Government Area.

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4. GUIDELINES

Domestic On-site Sewage Management

- 4.1 The installation and operation of any new on-site sewage management system requires an approval. For approval to be granted, the owner of the property must apply to Council.
- 4.2 All applications to install or alter on-site sewage management systems shall include-
- A site plan with the following:
 - The location of the effluent disposal area(s) with amount of land available.
 - The location of the sewage management system.
 - The location of all current and/or proposed buildings.
 - All property boundaries, driveways, gardens, paved areas etc.
 - Distances to any environmentally sensitive areas e.g. rivers, creeks, bores, drainage depressions, dams etc.
 - Details of the sewage management system proposed to be installed.
 - Certificates of Accreditation from Department of Health for the system to be installed.
 - Floor plans clearly showing the number of bedrooms in the dwelling and any other habitable rooms that may be used or converted into a bedroom.
- 4.3 All new domestic applications are classified into categories determined by the amount of suitable effluent disposal area available. The categories determine the type of effluent management permissible. Each category varies in terms of the potential risk of installing an on-site sewage management system on that site and require different amounts of information to be submitted with the application to install.

Please note - The suitable effluent disposal area does not include buffer distances, these must be provided in accordance with Section 4.8 of this policy.

All systems will be classified into one of the three categories shown below:

- Category 1 - Lots with 1500 m² or more of suitable effluent disposal area**
- Category 2 - Lots with between 300 m² and 1500m² of suitable effluent disposal area**
- Category 3 - Lots with less than 300 m² of suitable effluent disposal area**

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4.4 Category 1 - Lots with 1500 m2 or more of suitable effluent disposal area:

- 4.4.1 Surface irrigation with a movable line is permissible.
- 4.4.2 Effluent disposal areas of this size are expected to be able to satisfactorily cope with domestic wastewater loads of up to 10 persons.
- 4.4.3 Only a minimum site assessment is required for sites in this category where an Aerated Wastewater Treatment System (AWTS) is proposed. A more detailed report may be requested by Council if considered necessary.

A detailed wastewater report prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced wastewater consultant outlining how the system will comply with the relevant legislation and guidelines is required if:

- 4.4.4 The land is located within the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment.
- 4.4.5 Sub-soil disposal systems (i.e. trenches, beds, mounds, etc.) are proposed.
- 4.4.6 Alternate systems such as biological filter systems, greywater treatment systems, or wet and waterless composting system are proposed.
- 4.4.7 The land is located on a steep slope (more than 10%)

4.5 Category 2 - Lots with between 300 m2 and 1500m2 of suitable effluent disposal area:

- 4.5.1 Only sub-surface irrigation is permissible.
- 4.5.2 A detailed wastewater report prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced wastewater consultant detailing how the system will comply with the relevant legislation and guidelines must be submitted.

4.6 Category 3 - Lots with less than 300 m² of suitable effluent disposal area:

- 4.6.1 Only pump-out systems are permissible.
- 4.6.2 A greywater treatment system may be installed; a detailed wastewater report is required for the installation of these systems.

Potential Bedrooms

4.7 For domestic systems the design daily flow calculations are based on the number of potential bedrooms, the following table is used:

Design Wastewater loading for each potential bedroom	Reticulated/bore Water	Tank Water
1-2 potential bedrooms	600 L/d	400L/d
3 potential bedrooms	900L/d	600L/d
4 potential bedrooms	1200L/d	800L/d
More than 4 potential bedrooms	1200L/d plus 150 L/d for each additional bedroom	800L/d plus 100L/d for each additional bedroom

Note - Council maintains the discretion to classify studies and other rooms that have the potential to be used as sleeping rooms as bedrooms. Council will assess each application based on its merits

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Buffer Distances

4.8 The following buffer distances apply to all categories unless otherwise specified:

All land application Systems	100 metres to permanent surface waters (e.g. river, streams lakes etc.) 250 metres to domestic groundwater well 40 metres to other waters (e.g. farm dams, intermittent waterways & drainage channels etc.)
AWTS surface spray irrigation	6 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down-gradient of driveways & property boundaries 15 metres to dwellings 3 metres to paths & walkways 6 metres to swimming pools
AWTS surface drip & trickle irrigation	6 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down gradient of swimming pools, property boundaries, driveways & buildings
Subsurface irrigation	6 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down-gradient of swimming pools, property boundaries, driveways & buildings
Absorption systems	12 metres if area up-gradient & 6 metres if area down-gradient of property boundary 6 metres if area up-gradient & 3 metres if area down-gradient of swimming pools, driveways & buildings.
Market Gardens	AWTS only permitted with 20 metres if area is up-gradient & 10 metres if area is down-gradient of any market garden

Residential Systems with more than 10 people and Commercial Systems

4.9 Any on-site sewage system not used for domestic purposes or that is expected to receive an equivalent daily wastewater volume between 10 EP and 2500 EP is typically regarded as a commercial sewage management system, or a package wastewater treatment plant.

These systems are to be designed by a suitably qualified and experienced wastewater consultant. Individual design, water quality details and calculation of peak flow and average flow rates must be submitted to Council as part of the application. Effluent disposal areas are required to be calculated in accordance with these flow rates.

Typically industrial premises are required to install a pump out system due to the high level of chemical and physical contaminants.

Miscellaneous requirements

4.10 The requirements of this policy become applicable where property owners propose dwelling alterations or additions that increase the number of potential bedrooms or the existing effluent disposal area has been reduced.

4.11 Wastewater reports prepared for subdivision applications must evaluate wastewater irrigation areas for a minimum of a 5 bedroom dwelling.

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- 4.12 Pump out systems may be considered for existing unsewered building entitlements where a sustainable on-site sewage management option is not viable. Requests to use a pumpout must include written evidence of why other systems are impracticable, why a pumpout is deemed to be an acceptable alternative and how it will meet the objectives of this policy and relevant legislative requirements.
- 4.13 Grey water diversion devices require the submission of a wastewater report in all unsewered area. If the property is connected to sewer a grey water device that has a WaterMark licence and is listed by NSW Health can be installed without Council approval.
- 4.14 At the completion of installation, construction or alteration of a system, the system is not permitted to be operated until such time as the Council has issued an 'Approval to Operate'. To obtain an Approval to Operate a Notice of Works, Certificate of Compliance and Sewer Service diagram must be submitted to Council. Failure to obtain an Approval to Operate and comply with the conditions of the Approval is an offence and may result in prosecution.
- 4.15 It is a requirement that all AWTS are serviced on a regular basis and that an ongoing contract is maintained with a person who has appropriate qualifications and experience in monitoring, inspecting, servicing and maintenance.

5. RESPONSIBILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

- 5.1 Manager – Compliance
- 5.2 Manager – Development
- 5.3 Team Leader – Compliance
- 5.4 Team Leader – Building Assessment
- 5.5 Senior Environmental Health Officer
- 5.6 Senior Building Surveyors
- 5.7 Building Surveyors
- 5.8 Assistant Building Surveyors
- 5.9 All staff providing information to the community in relation to on-site sewage management.

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On-site Sewage Management and Greywater Re-use Policy

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 6.1 This Policy Council will adhere to the following standards:
 - 6.1.1 *Designing and Installing On-site Wastewater Systems*, Sydney Catchment Authority (2012)
 - 6.1.2 *On-site Sewage Management Strategy*, Wollondilly Shire Council (2016)
 - 6.1.3 The Australian/New Zealand Standard AS1547:2012 On-Site Domestic Wastewater Management
 - 6.1.4 *Environment and Health Protection Guidelines: On-site sewage management for single households* New South Wales Department of Local Government (1998) (aka 'Silver Book')
 - 6.1.5 *Neutral or Beneficial Effect on Water Quality Assessment Guideline (NorBE)*, Sydney Catchment Authority, (2011).
 - 6.1.6 *NSW Guidelines for Greywater Reuse in Sewered, Single Household Residential Premises*, New South Wales Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability (2008)
 - 6.1.7 *Water Sensitive Design Guide for Rural Residential Subdivisions* Sydney Catchment Authority (2011)
 - 6.1.8 *Environmental Guidelines – Use of Effluent by Irrigation*, NSW Department of Environment & Conservation (2004)
 - 6.1.9 *Septic Tank and Collection Well Accreditation Guidelines*, NSW Health (2001).
 - 6.1.10 *The Wollondilly Development Control Plan 2016*

7. RELATED PROCEDURES

- 7.1 Nil

8. RELATED LEGISLATION

- 8.1 This policy is to be read in conjunction with:
 - 8.1.1 *The Local Government Act 1993*;
 - 8.1.2 *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*;
 - 8.1.3 *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*;
 - 8.1.4 *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*;
 - 8.1.5 *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011*
 - 8.1.6 *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*
 - 8.1.7 *State Environmental Planning Policy (Drinking Water Catchment) 2011*.

9. ATTACHMENTS

- 9.1 Definitions

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On-site Sewage Management and Greywater Re-use Policy

10. RESOURCES

- 10.1 Sydney Catchment Authority – Design and Installation of On-site Wastewater Systems manual (2012)
- 10.2 Environment and Health Protection Guidelines – On-Site Sewage Management for Single Households
- 10.3 Standard AS/NZS 1547:2012 “On-site Domestic Wastewater Management”

11. IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

- 11.1 To ensure this policy is implemented effectively, Council will employ a variety of strategies involving awareness, education and training. These strategies will be aimed at Councillors, staff and council representatives and will involve:
 - 11.1.1 Placing the draft policy on public exhibition.
 - 11.1.2 Taking into consideration any submissions received in relation to the draft policy.
 - 11.1.3 Providing information sessions for the relevant staff who will directly use this policy in their duties.

12. POLICY HISTORY

- 12.1 Date First Adopted 16 May 2011
- 12.2 Last Amendment 2014
- 12.3 Most Recent Adoption 2016
- 12.4 Next Review Date 2018
- 12.5 Responsible Officer Manager Compliance
- 12.6 Document Control Number

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**On-site Sewage Management
and Greywater Re-use Policy**

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DEFINITIONS

Aerated wastewater treatment system (AWTS): An aerated waste water treatment system treats all household waste water and involves the settling of solids, oxidation and consumption of organic matter, clarification of solids and disinfection using chlorination prior to irrigation.

Buffer Distance: A distance measured in metres that represent the length of separation between an effluent disposal area and features like property boundaries, buildings, driveways, swimming pools and water courses.

Effluent: Liquid discharge from a septic tank or aerated waste water treatment system.

Effluent disposal area: the area designated for the disposal water from on-site sewage management systems.

Groundwater: all underground waters

On-site Sewage Management System (OSSM): any facility that stores, treats and/or disposes of sewage and/or waste water on-site.

Run-off: rain water and/or irrigated effluent that becomes surface flow because it is not immediately absorbed into the soil

Run-on: surface water flowing on to an irrigation area as a result of run-off occurring higher up the slope

Septic tank: wastewater treatment device that provides a primary treatment of wastewater, where solids settle at the bottom, oils and fats float to the top and liquid passes through the system.

Sewage: waste matter which passes through sewers. Sewage includes any effluent of a kind referred to in paragraph (a) of the definition of waste in the Local Government Act.

Sewage management: any activity carried out for the purpose of holding or processing, or reusing or otherwise disposing of, sewage or by-products of sewage.

Soil absorption trench: Trenches are constructed below ground surface, from 300 to 900mm deep, and usually consist of a durable self supporting arch, gravel or sand.

Sub-surface Irrigation: effluent dripper system with irrigation lines buried 100mm below the ground surface.

Suitable effluent disposal area – An area of land specifically designated for the application of effluent, this land complies with all buffer distances, slopes and all other criteria to allow wastewater disposal.

Wastewater: water that contains waste wastewater arising from household activities, including wastewater from bathrooms, kitchens and laundries, which includes sewage and greywater.

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**ON-SITE SEWAGE
MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**
Trim 1956

WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL

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Rural Living

Planning & Economy

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WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL

ONSITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Wollondilly Shire is located 75 kilometres south west of the Sydney CBD with an approximate size of 2560 km² within mainly rural and semi-rural areas. In 2014 the population was around 47,000, spread across a number of towns and villages. A large part of the Shire lies within the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment, with our region containing the main source of water for Sydney. To protect our drinking water it is very important that our waterways are not polluted by effluent. Council must manage and monitor the cumulative environmental impacts of on-site sewage management systems.

Wollondilly has over 5000 on-site sewage management systems (OSSM), one of the highest numbers in New South Wales. This number is increasing with more development in the rural and semi-rural areas. Sydney Water Corporation provides and manages the reticulated sewer system which is available to most smaller lots within the towns and villages of the Wollondilly Shire. Sydney Water sewer systems do not service larger lots on the fringes of these towns, semi-rural and rural areas, the villages of Menangle, Yanderra, Nattai and Mount Hunter and isolated streets.

In 1998 Sydney's drinking water was contaminated with *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia*. In response to the crisis, the State Government established a Commission of Inquiry, with Peter McClellan QC as Commissioner. McClellan found the highest faecal coliform values entering the catchment at the inlet of Werri Berri Creek in Wollondilly. This situation was of particular concern as the area is located only eight kilometres from the Warragamba dam wall. The creek contamination was the result of septic seepage from the unsewered villages of The Oaks and Oakdale. From this contamination Sydney Water fast tracked sewer availability to all residential areas in the Warragamba catchment.

In response to this crisis, the Wallis Creek Oyster contamination in 1998, and concerns that many on-site systems were failing to satisfy environmental and health performance criteria, the *Local Government (Approvals) Amendment (Sewage Management) Regulation* was introduced in 1998. This legislation made it mandatory for councils to approve and monitor the operation of all on-site sewage management systems and ensure that those systems complied with environmental and public health performance standards.

Effective management of wastewater is an important consideration for human health and the environment. Within the Shire, the majority of onsite systems are septic tanks with absorption trenches or aerated wastewater treatment systems (AWTS). The existing domestic systems vary in age, design, installation, loading and operation. There is also a varying level of knowledge amongst owners/occupiers of properties. To ensure effective management of wastewater treatment the active involvement of both the Council and landholders is required.

This Strategy has been prepared by Wollondilly Shire Council and should be read in conjunction with Council's On-Site Sewage Management System and Greywater Re-use Policy. The Policy is designed to provide a framework for the design and installation of on-site systems within the Shire. This strategy provides the framework for ongoing monitoring and regulations of on-site systems within the Shire.

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1.2 Scope

This strategy concerns all on-site sewage management systems that do not discharge into the Sydney Water sewer system and are not regulated by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

The following systems are all classified as on-site sewage management systems under this Strategy:

- Aerated Wastewater Treatment Systems (AWTS)
- Septic tank and absorption trenches
- Septic tank and evapotranspiration/absorption areas
- Pump-out/collection well systems
- AWTS and sand mound/eco-max systems
- Greywater treatment systems
- Composting toilet systems
- Any other system that stores, treats or disposes of wastewater on-site accredited by NSW Health.
- All package treatment systems

1.3 Strategy Objectives

The main objectives of this Strategy are to:

- Define Council's role and programs in managing and regulating on-site sewage management systems in the Wollondilly Shire;
- Identify strategies to reduce the impact from on-site sewage management systems on the environment, public health and public amenity;
- Encourage community ownership and responsibility for the use and impacts of onsite sewage management.
- Provide a framework for the assessment of environmental factors, which can be used to monitor the performance of on-site sewage management activities within the Shire;
- Integrate and coordinate issues relating to on-site sewage management with Council management plans and growth strategies;
- Facilitate the desktop assessment process of on-site sewage management systems.

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1.4 Performance Objectives

Each onsite sewage system must be considered on its own merit. The system must be appropriate for long term use on the site and meet the following performance objectives:

- **Prevention of public health risk** – sewage contains bacteria, viruses, parasites and other disease-causing organisms. Contact with effluent should be minimised or eliminated, particularly for children. Residuals, such as composted material, should be handled carefully. Treated sewage should not be used on edible crops that are consumed raw.
- **Protection of lands** – on-site sewage management systems should not cause deterioration of land and vegetation quality through soil structure degradation, salinisation, waterlogging, chemical contamination or soil erosion.
- **Protection of surface waters** – on-site sewage management systems should be selected, sited, designed, constructed, operated and maintained so that surface waters are not contaminated by any flow from treatment systems and land application areas (including effluent, rainfall run-off and contaminated groundwater flow)
- **Protection of groundwaters** – on-site sewage management systems should be selected, sited, designed, constructed, operated and maintained so that groundwaters are not contaminated by any flow from treatment systems and land application areas.
- **Conservation and re-use of resources** – the resources in domestic wastewater (including nutrients, organic matter and water) should be identified and utilised as much as possible within the bounds posed by the other performance objectives. Water conservation should be practiced and wastewater production should be minimised.
- **Protection of community amenity** – on-site sewage management systems should be selected, sited, designed, constructed, operated and maintained so that they do not unreasonably interfere with quality of life, and, where possible, so that they add to the local amenity – special consideration should be given to aesthetics, odour, dust and excessive noise.

1.5 Related Legislation and Guidelines

The following Acts, Regulations, Standards, Guidelines, Policies, and Strategies govern the installation, operation and maintenance of OSSMs within the Wollondilly LGA.

- Local Government Act 1993.
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2005.
- Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997.
- Australian/New Zealand Standard (AS/NZS) 1547:2012 – On-Site Domestic Wastewater Management
- NSW Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability (2007) Greywater Reuse in Sewered Single Domestic Premises.
- Environmental Health Protection Guidelines (1998) –On-Site Sewage Management for Single Households (“Silver Book”)

Report of Planning and Economy to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday 16 May 2016

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1.6 Related Documents

On-site sewage management are incorporated in a number of Council Plans and Strategies. These include Council's Management Plan, the Wollondilly Vision 2025, Development Control Plans and Local Approval Policies.

In order for Council to effectively manage development, public health and environmental protection, consideration must also be given to the following:

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Drinking Water Catchment) 2011
- Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No. 20 – Hawkesbury-Nepean River
- Greater Metropolitan Regional Environmental Plan No. 2 – Georges River Catchment
- Section 79C of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979;
- Western Sydney Salinity Code of Practice;
- Stormwater Management Plans and Catchment Blueprints.

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PART 2: OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

2.1 Risk Classification System

Section 68 of the *Local Government Act* 1993 prescribes the operation of a system of sewage management as an activity that requires Council approval. Landowners must ensure that they have a current 'Approval to Operate' (ATO). An Approval to Operate is current for 1, 3 or 5 years dependent on the risk category assigned to a particular system. The risk categories have been developed to assess and manage the potential for harm that the particular system could cause to public health or the environment. In determining the risk category Council uses the following matrix

HIGH RISK – 12 MONTH APPROVAL (1 year)
▪ Residential lots smaller than 4000 m ²
▪ Lots in the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment
▪ Effluent disposal areas located 100 metres of watercourse or 40 metres of intermittent watercourses
▪ Properties with poor performance history
▪ Properties where sewer is available however the property has not connected
▪ All pump out systems
MEDIUM RISK – 3 YEAR APPROVAL
▪ Lots between 4000 m ² and 10,000 m ² that do not meet the criteria of 'High Risk Areas'
▪
LOW RISK – 5 YEAR APPROVAL
▪ Lots equal to or more than 10,000 m ² that do not meet the criteria of 'High Risk Areas'
<i>(Note: 10,000 m² = 1 hectare)</i>

2.2 Changes to Risk Categories

A property that is able to demonstrate a history of good compliance with all relevant legislation may be allowed to apply to change the risk category assigned to their Approval to Operate. Some properties are not eligible to change their risk category these include –

- Pump out systems
- Properties in Sydney Water Drinking Catchment
- Lots smaller than 1000 m²

2.3 Information Database

Council maintains a register of all systems located in the Shire in accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation* 2005. The information collected on the "Approval to Operate" applications is all contained within this register. Information stored includes system types, maintenance regimes and the currency of Approval to Operates.

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2.4 Fees

Operating a sewage management system is a prescribed activity under Section 68 (F10) of the *Local Government Act 1993*. This means that an Approval to Operate your sewage management system must be obtained from Council. The approval requires households to meet environment and health performance standards when operating their systems and allows Council to monitor the systems in the Shire to ensure these standards are met.

The approval fee contributes to monitoring and assurance of water quality, better control of effluent discharge, supervision of service agents, education programs and practical support to assist land owners. Residents in seweraged areas also pay for monitoring to ensure environmental standards are met through sewerage levy charges paid to Sydney Water.

Operating an on-site sewage management system without an Approval to Operate is an offence and may result in Council beginning compliance action against you.

2.5 Monitoring/ Inspection Program

Council is required to develop a monitoring program of existing systems and ensure these systems meet the environmental and health performance objectives set out in this strategy and in the Environmental and Health Protection Guidelines over the long term. This program involves the monitoring of servicing documentation and routine on-site inspections. Given the number of OSSM's currently in the Shire (approximately 5000), it is not practical or economically viable to inspect each individual system.

Inspections are therefore conducted in the event of complaint, at random, and in accordance with our risk classification system. General monitoring also occurs whilst Council Officers are undertaking duties in the area throughout the Shire. Council's annual inspection program also includes all pump out systems within the Shire.

Pump out systems

Pump out systems are not sustainable and are often the worst performing on-site systems due to misuse and poor practices. Due to this, all pump out systems require ongoing monitoring to ensure they are being pumped out regularly and not being illegally discharged. Inspections are performed to examine pump-out data and establish ongoing and consistent collection of effluent. Should the owner of a pump out system submit one (1) years' worth of pump out receipts, Council may not require an inspection for that year. However an inspection may be required the following year.

2.6 Complaint Response Program

Council investigates all complaints relating to system failures or the incorrect use of a system. It is the responsibility of the owner or occupier of the property to ensure that on-site systems are managed in a way that prevents nuisances, damage, environmental harm, or risks to human health. Owners need to ensure that all occupiers are also aware of the systems' operation and maintenance requirements.

OSSM regulatory matters are generally identified through proactive programs mentioned above and complaints received from residents or other parties. Details of Customer Request Management (CRMs) or complaints received by Council are required to be documented in Council's Authority data base and are assigned designated action timeframes for the investigating officer. Should Council receive a justified complaint about a system, appropriate action in accordance with Section 2.7 will be commenced. Changes may also be made to the risk categorisation of the systems as a result of any complaint investigation.



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2.7 Enforcement

In circumstances where sewage management systems are causing health and/or environmental issues, Council will take action using the most appropriate legislation for the circumstance. This may include the use of Notices and Orders to require certain works to be undertaken or the issuing of penalties in severe cases. The two main Legislative Acts Council uses are as follows -

Local Government Act 1993

Where systems fail to achieve the required standards Council may require action or works to be carried out under Section 124 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (LGA Act) where it may –

- Order the property to connect to the sewer where available.
- Order the modification or upgrade of a system.
- Order the conversion of a system to pump out where on-site disposal is no longer safe/suitable.

When Council takes action under Section 124 of the LGA Act the following process will occur –

- Council issues a *Notice of Intention to Serve an Order*, stipulating works to be completed by a specified date. This Notice allows a period for the landowner to make representations or negotiate terms with Council.
- If the required works are not completed in this time, Council will issue an Order with a specific date for completion.
- Failure to complete the required works by the given date will result in issue of a Penalty Infringement Notice being issued and the *Notice of Intention to Serve an Order* process will begin again.
- Should the Order not be complied with a second time, Council will take the system owner to Court to ensure all required works are completed.
- In the event of major defects, emergencies or where previous action has been taken, Council may issue an emergency Order or commence direct legal action

Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997

If the potential for environmental pollution is high, Council will use the powers of *The Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act) where it may –

- Issue a Prevention or Clean Up Notice requiring works to be undertaken.
- Issue an administrative fee depending on the time spent by Council investigating.
- Issue a Penalty Infringement Notice for the pollution of land or waters
- Issue a Penalty Infringement Notice for failure to comply with a Clean-up or Prevention Notice.
- Commence action in the Land and Environment Court to require Clean-up Action.
- Undertake Clean-up Action and issue a Compliance Cost Notice to recoup expenses.

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2.8 Aerated Wastewater Treatment System Maintenance

AWTS systems are required to be serviced on a quarterly basis with service reports to be forwarded to Council. All quarterly service reports are then reviewed by Council and stored on the property file. Any operational or water quality issues identified by the technician will be required to be addressed by the owner. Failure to do so may lead to a breakdown and subsequent failure of the treatment and disposal system.

Any technician wishing to service AWTS's within the Shire is required to satisfy Council that they possess adequate skills and knowledge to maintain such systems. This can be done by providing appropriate documentation demonstrating satisfactory knowledge and skills. In accordance with the above, technicians must forward on all service reports within seven (7) days.

2.9 Education

Education is important part of overall sewage management in the Shire and educating system owners is an important role for Council. Owners of OSSMs should understand how their system operates and the possible consequences of a faulty or mismanaged system. Council undertakes many educational activities in relation to on-site sewage management systems including –

- Providing advice and guidance on the use, maintenance and operation of individual systems.
- Providing information and factsheets on Councils website including links to other Authorities such as Water NSW and NSW Health.
- Ongoing consultation with relevant stakeholders to ensure all information and guidance is up to date with best practice management.
- Providing new owners with fact sheets on how to use their system correctly.
- Providing self-assurance checklists as a part of the Approval to Operate process.

2.10 Resources

It is a statutory requirement that Council utilise funds from the processing of applications for Approval to Operate Systems of On-Site Sewage Management, for the development and implementation of programs to further improve the overall management of such systems within the Wollondilly Shire. As such Council's Senior Environmental Health Officer inspects and assesses the performance and operation of these systems. Council also employs an administration officer to process new and renewal applications for Approval to Operate Systems of On-Site Sewage Management.

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2.11 Conclusion

Council considers the approach identified as being the most practical, yet effective means of addressing the issue of on-site sewage management within the Wollondilly Local Government Area. The following summarises the approaches proposed:

- Use of a database of on-site sewage management systems to monitor and improve the management and servicing of systems within the Shire;
- Completion of scheduled inspections of certain on-site sewage management systems according to the level of risk they pose to public health, the environment and community amenity;
- Develop and implement a cost effective, sustainable and manageable inspection regime;
- The use of legislative powers if cooperation between the owner and the Council has not succeeded in achieving the desired health and environment performance standards;
- Development of self-assurance check list for the assessment of on-site sewage management systems;
- Dissemination of factsheets and other educational information for the community.

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GLOSSARY

Aerated wastewater treatment system (AWTS): An aerated waste water treatment system treats all household waste water and involves the settling of solids, oxidation and consumption of organic matter, clarification of solids and disinfection using chlorination prior to irrigation.

Buffer Distance: A distance measured in metres that represents the length of separation between an effluent disposal area and features like property boundaries, buildings, driveways, swimming pools and water courses.

Effluent: Liquid discharge from a septic tank or aerated waste water treatment system.

Effluent disposal area: the area designated for the disposal water from on-site sewage management systems.

Groundwater: all underground waters

On-site Sewage Management System (OSSM): any facility that stores, treats and/or disposes of sewage and/or waste water on-site.

Run-off: rain water and/or irrigated effluent that becomes surface flow because it is not immediately absorbed into the soil

Run-on: surface water flowing on to an irrigation area as a result of run-off occurring higher up the slope

Septic tank: wastewater treatment device that provides a primary treatment of wastewater, where solids settle at the bottom, oils and fats float to the top and liquid passes through the system.

Sewage: waste matter which passes through sewers. Sewage includes any effluent of a kind referred to in paragraph (a) of the definition of waste in the Local Government Act.

Sewage management: any activity carried out for the purpose of holding or processing, or reusing or otherwise disposing of, sewage or by-products of sewage.

Soil absorption trench: Trenches are constructed below ground surface, from 300 to 900mm deep, and usually consist of a durable self supporting arch, gravel or sand.

Sub-surface Irrigation: effluent dripper system with irrigation lines buried 100mm below the ground surface.

Suitable effluent disposal area – An area of land specifically designated for the application of effluent, this land complies with all buffer distances, slopes and all other criteria to allow wastewater disposal.

Wastewater: water that contains waste wastewater arising from household activities, including wastewater from bathrooms, kitchens and laundries, which includes sewage and greywater.

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APPENDIX A

Performance Standards

The following performance standards have been developed to assist in measuring the effectiveness of the Strategy and its defined activities:

Activities	Performance Targets	Performance Indicators
Poorly operating & discharging systems	Maintaining of public & environmental health standards	Reduction in the number of complaints received by Council Improvement in local waterways
Poorly maintained/ managed systems	Preventing the spread of foul odours	Reduction in the number of complaints received by Council
Overloading of effluent disposal areas – surface effluent/ waterlogging of soils	Preventing contamination of surface & groundwaters Preventing the spread of disease by microorganisms	Improvement in the quality of local waterways Auditing of individual systems
Improper maintenance – poorly sealed units	Discourage insects & vermin	Reduction in the number of complaints received by Council Auditing of individual systems
Discharging/ overflowing systems, high hands-on mgt. required	Ensure that persons do not come into contact with untreated or treated sewage or effluent on the premises	Action Request/ Complaint System Auditing of individual systems
Inappropriately designed land application areas, migration of effluent	Minimise adverse impacts on public health & the amenity of the premises & surrounding lands	Reduction in the number of complaints received by Council Reduction in observed runoff of effluent
Use of higher performing sewage treatment systems	Where appropriate make provision for reuse of resources (e.g. water, nutrients)	Council approval of increasing numbers of advanced sewage treatment systems