

SEPTIC TANK SYSTEMS

Care and Maintenance



For those houses which must dispose of their wastewater on-site, a septic tank is one of the few options available. While it is important that these systems are installed correctly, maintenance of the septic tank and care of the absorption drains are just as important to ensure the system will operate correctly for years to come.

Septic Tank

- The septic tank should be in good condition with its lid and inspection openings sealed against the entry of stormwater or roots.
- If an outlet filter is fitted, this should be checked annually, shaking off solids back into the tank.
- The tank is to be desludged by approved liquid waste contractor every three to five years.
- After desludging, refill the tank to outlet level with clean water and flush down the toilet one cup of garden lime twice a week for a month, to ensure correct start-up conditions.
- Where applicable, grease traps, lint traps and sumps and pumps should be cleaned on a regular basis to avoid unpleasant odours, blockages and pump failure.
- For sullage tanks, the same recommendations should be applied.

Absorption Drains

- Inspect the drains annually to ensure they are still functioning correctly and that there is no surface ponding or run off of effluent.
- Keep the drains free of excessive vegetation, to maximise exposure to sun and wind.
- Keep stock and vehicles away from absorption drains, as damage may be caused.
- Stormwater drainage must be kept away from absorption drains.
- Expect your absorption drains to fail eventually and budget for their replacement, ensuring sufficient suitable area is reserved in your land for future drainage requirements.

It is important to ensure all wastewater is correctly disposed of on your own land, not causing a nuisance to neighbouring properties or yourself.

Any work on the system must first have a Council permit and be carried out by a licensed Plumber in accordance with that permit. Contact Council's Environmental Health Department on ph 03 6323 9300 for advice.

A free information DVD titled "*To flush isn't the end of the line*" can be obtained from one of Council's offices on request.