



Warning Signs

Regular observation of the septic tank and visual checking of the trench/ transpiration system will ensure that problems are located and fixed early.

The warning signs of system failure include:

- Wastewater surfacing and ponding on the application area.
- Water drains from the house slowly.
- Drain pipes that gargle or make noises.
- Sewage smells from drains or system.
- Water backing up into your sink.

Reducing Water Usage

Reducing water usage in your home will lessen the likelihood of problems such as overloading with your septic system. Overloading may result in wastewater backing up into your house, contamination of your yard with improperly treated effluent or effluent from your system contaminating groundwater, nearby creeks, rivers or dams.

Conservative water use around the home will reduce the amount of wastewater entering the system and prolong the life of your application area.

Poorly maintained Septic and Trench/Transpiration Bed Systems are a serious source of water pollution and may present health risks, cause odours and attract vermin and insects.

By looking after your system you can do your part in protecting the environment and the health of you and your family.

Approval to Install & Operate

Under the Local Government act 1993 all On-Site Sewage Management Systems require Council approval prior to installation. An application to install an on-site sewage management system must be accompanied by a Waste Water Management Report prepared by a suitably qualified consultant. The consultant will look at the land and soil type and put forward a recommendation determining what type of system is needed based on the individual characteristics of the site and the anticipated loading. The report will also detail the most appropriate location for the system on your property.

The NSW Government introduced the SepticSafe Program in 1998 to help property owners and Councils keep onsite sewage management systems working efficiently and safely. All owners of sewage management systems are now required to apply to Council for an Approval to Operate. This Approval is a means by which the Council can monitor and manage the cumulative impact of sewage pollution in local areas. The Approval also ensures that property owners are aware of their responsibility to efficiently operate and regularly maintain their system.

For further information or advice please contact Upper Lachlan Council's Department of Environmental Services on 02 4830 1000.

On- Site Sewage Management

Septic Tank and Trench/ Transpiration Bed Systems



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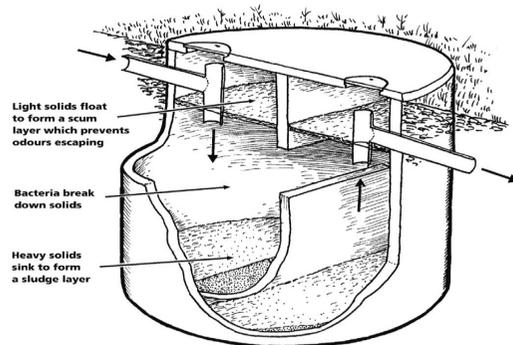
Septic Tank and Trench/Transpiration Bed Systems

What is a Septic Tank System and how does it work?

Septic Tank Systems usually consist of a single tank, however in circumstances where the absorption area is located higher than the septic tank a second tank, known as a holding tank is required. This allows for pump assisted transfer of liquid effluent to the trench or transpiration area.

These systems only provide Primary Treatment of the household's wastewater. This involves the settling of solids which form a sludge layer in the bottom of the tank and the floatation of fats and greases which form the scum layer seen on the top.

Wastewater that has been treated using this type of system can only be applied to land through a soil covered absorption system such as a trench or transpiration area, as the effluent produced is too contaminated for above ground or near surface application.



Maintaining your Septic System

The effectiveness of your system is dependent on how it is operated and maintained. The following is a guide on how to achieve the most from your system:

Do

- ✓ Learn how your system functions and its operational and maintenance requirements.
- ✓ Learn the location and layout of your system and land application area.
- ✓ Have your system de-sludged every 3-5 years, and clean grease trap (if installed) every 2 months.
- ✓ Keep a record of inspections, pump outs and other maintenance.
- ✓ Check household products for suitability for use with a septic tank.
- ✓ Conserve water.

Don't

- ✗ Put large quantities of bleaches, disinfectants, whiteners, nappy soakers and spot cleaners into your system.
- ✗ Allow any foreign materials such as nappies, sanitary napkins, condoms or other hygiene products to enter the system.
- ✗ Put fats and oils down the drain.
- ✗ Install or use a garbage grinder or spa bath unless your system is designed for it.



Maintaining your Land Application Area

The effectiveness of the land application area is also governed by the activities of the owner. Regular maintenance is essential in prolonging the life of your system.

Do

- ✓ Construct and maintain diversion drains on the top side of the application area to divert surface water runoff.
- ✓ Ensure your trench/ transpiration area is kept level by filling any depressions with good quality top soil.
- ✓ Keep grass regularly mowed to aid absorption and transpiration of the effluent..
- ✓ Fence your land application area to avoid it being driven on or trampled by regular stock movement.

Don't

- ✗ Erect any structures, construct paths, graze animals or drive over your trench/ transpiration area.
- ✗ Plant large trees that shade the trench/transpiration area as the area requires sunlight to aid in the transpiration of the effluent.
- ✗ Plant trees or shrubs on or near wastewater drainage pipes from the house.
- ✗ Flood the trench/ transpiration area through the use of hoses or sprinklers.