



FACT SHEET – ON-SITE SEWER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS: A GUIDE FOR PROPERTY OWNERS

Current environmental legislation in NSW requires that all owners of on-site sewage management systems (OSMS) apply for an 'approval to operate' from their local council. This legislation also requires that councils implement a management program for the approval and monitoring of new, altered and existing systems. In accordance with these requirements, Lachlan Shire Council (LSC) has developed an OSMS Strategy with the objective of improving the performance standards of all wastewater systems in the Shire. This strategy also aims to reduce impacts on public health and the environment caused by system failure. A brief outline of this strategy and details of the inspection process are outlined in this information sheet.

How do I obtain an approval to operate an on-site sewage management system?

- An *OSMS Application Form* is required to be submitted with the prescribed fee(s). These forms are available on the LSC website, or, from the Council's Administration Office.
- The fees associated with the Approval to Operate are payable at the time of application (refer to Council's current Fees & Charges).

Important Notice: Due to the serious public health risks, operation of on-site systems *WITHOUT* an approval in NSW is an offence which can attract penalties of up to \$2,200.

- Owners who have not yet made an application for an "Approval to Operate" are advised to contact Council as soon as practicable to obtain an application form.

What requirements are there for ongoing operation of the OSMS?

- All OSMS approvals contain conditions that outline the best management practices for system types nominated on individual applications.
- Owners are advised to operate their systems in accordance with the conditions attached to their approval to operate.

When do systems need to be inspected?

Council officers have been carrying out inspections of on-site sewage management systems since March 2000, in accordance with state-wide legislation. After each inspection, the system will be classified as high, medium or low risk and further inspections will be carried out at a frequency based on this risk assessment:

High Risk – 1 year

Medium Risk – 3 years

Low Risk – 5 years



Lachlan Shire Council
PO Box 216
58-64 Molong Street, Condobolin NSW 2877
P: 02 6895 1900
F: 02 6895 3478
E: council@lachlan.nsw.gov.au
W: www.lachlan.nsw.gov.au



Aerated systems currently being serviced by approved service agents will be classified as either *Medium* or *Low Risk* once Council determines that the individual systems meet the performance standards outlined in the legislation and the OSMS Strategy.

How are inspections organised?

The inspections process aims to identify problems with the operation of sewage management systems. It is also an ideal time for owners to receive advice on the best operation and management practices to improve the performance and life expectancy of their individual systems.

Prior to an inspection taking place residents will be contacted by Council staff to organize an appropriate time.

How much does it cost?

This schedule has been designed to provide Council and users of on-site sewage management systems with a cost-effective, user pays monitoring program that is revenue neutral to Council and provides an efficient mechanism to ensure the long-term environmental and public health objectives of legislation. Fees will be charged as per Council's Fees and Charges schedule.

Helpful Hints:

- If you own or live on a property that has an On-site Sewage Management System, ensure it has an 'Approval to Operate'. If not, contact Council immediately.
- If you recently purchased a property that has an On-site Sewage Management System, you will be required to obtain an approval to operate.
- Read the approval and ensure the system is operated in accordance with the attached conditions.

Need further information?

For further advice on Council's On-site Sewage Management System Policy, please contact Council's Environment & Planning Department on (02) 6895 1950, email council@lachlan.nsw.gov.au, or visit Council's website www.lachlan.nsw.gov.au.

