



SEWER CONNECTION EXEMPTION POLICY

Responsible Officer: Manager Environment and Community Safety	Adoption Date:	21/04/2015
	Approved By:	Council
Authorising Officer: Director Development Services	Review Date:	2018
	Policy Type	Council

INTRODUCTION

This policy is to address applications to allow continued usage of existing onsite domestic wastewater treatment plants on residential properties that meet defined standards, when reticulated sewer becomes available. This policy does not apply to new building and development after the date of adoption of this policy. Such developments are required to connect to sewer.

CONTEXT

The introduction of Domestic Secondary Treatment Systems (DSTS) for residential dwellings as opposed to older septic systems, has resulted in a much higher quality of effluent being disposed of to land, which in turn means a lower level of pollution to land.

In sewerred areas, properties are required to connect to sewer under the State Environment Protection Policy (SEPP) 'Waters of Victoria'. When sewerage first becomes available, an exemption can be considered if an existing onsite DSTS is able to meet EPA treatment standards and retain all treated wastes within the boundaries of the property.

SCOPE

Where a property has an existing Environment Protection Authority (EPA) approved DSTS that was installed before the property owners were formally notified by the Water Corporation that a reticulated sewerage system is available, the treatment system may be retained if it meets all the following conditions:

- the effluent quality is verified, via independent sampling and analysis at a NATA approved laboratory, to be 20/30 secondary standard or a higher standard, as required in the original Certificate of Approval.
- the premises owner has demonstrated to the satisfaction of Council that the effluent is being sustainably recycled and contained on site in all weather conditions

- service reports which verify that the premises owner/occupier has maintained an ongoing service history with a professional service technician are provided to Council
- the DSTS is managed and serviced in accordance with the conditions on its Certificate of Approval and the conditions on the Council Permit to Install/Alter.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the environment and public health are protected, and recognises an existing DSTS meeting the standards of this policy can provide appropriate treatment without connection to sewer.

POLICY

DEFINITION

Domestic Secondary Treatment System – an onsite wastewater treatment system which treats all wastes generated on the property to a 20/30 standard (20 mg/L BOD 30 mg/L suspended solids), within the boundaries of the property. Higher standards will apply as required in the original Certificate of Approval.

COMMITMENT

Council is committed to only allowing an exemption where the conditions under the Scope of this Policy have been met.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Officers responsible for approving an application under this Policy are the Environmental Health Coordinator and the Environmental Health Officer. Any appeal will be decided by the Director Development Services.

Officers responsible for revoking a Sewer Connection Exemption under this Policy are the Environmental Health Coordinator and the Environmental Health Officer. Any appeal will be decided by the Director Development Services.

REPORTING

The results of consideration of applications for exemption from sewer connection will be maintained within Council's record system.

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Council will maintain a Management Framework that complies with the scope of this Policy.

.Key elements of the management framework include:

- verification that service reports demonstrate compliance with the conditions of the Certificate of Approval and the conditions on the Council Permit to Install/Alter and
- annual inspection and condition report to check that a DSTS complies with the effluent standards of this policy.

The exemption to connect to sewer will be revoked where the system is to be replaced, or becomes unserviceable or does not continue to meet the standards required in this policy, or

maintenance does not comply with conditions of the Certificate of Approval and the conditions on the Council Permit to Install/Alter.

Where an exemption to connect has been revoked, Council will issue a Notice to Connect to Sewer, and connection must occur within the period specified on that notice, which shall be no longer than 3 months.

OTHER INTEGRATION ARRANGEMENTS

In considering any application for exemption under this Policy, reference must be made to the following reference documents.

REFERENCES

Guidelines for environmental management: code of practice – onsite wastewater management (EPA publication 891) is the principal reference for this policy.

Victorian land capability assessment framework (Municipal Association of Victoria)

State Environment Protection Policy 'Water of Victoria'

REVIEW

Any change or update to the basis for this policy which materially impacts and alters this policy will be addressed at the time of the change or update through a Council resolution to adopt an updated policy. Otherwise, this policy will be reviewed once every three years at a detailed level by Council officers. Following the detailed review, an updated policy will be recommended to Council for adoption.