

# Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) - additional connections



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<b>File Number</b>	14/POL/CWMSAC/2
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Director – Infrastructure Services & Field Services
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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1** Mid Murray Council owns and manages 28 Community Wastewater Management Systems (CWMS) ("the systems"), operating predominantly in shack areas located along the River Murray – with the exception of Truro, which disposes into the Stockwell Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP). Which is owned and managed by the Barossa Council. The systems vary in type, and generally range from full sewer CWMS to pressure Septic Tank Effluent Drainage Scheme (STEDS), gravity STEDS, and straight gravity sewer.
- 1.2** The design of a CWMS is generally on the number of existing dwellings or allotments in a particular area or locality that will connect into the system. This is typically one dwelling per allotment. A single CWMS connection point services each allotment and therefore the number of allotments typically equals the number of CWMS connection points. As a result, a CWMS is only designed to accommodate the wastewater flows from a certain number of connections.
- 1.3** To permit additional connections into a CWMS that have not been considered as part of the original design may result in shortcomings in the effective operation of the CWMS and an increase in time and costs to maintain the CWMS and associated infrastructure – as a result of exceeding the capacity of the system. If inflows exceed capacity, risks to public health and the health of the natural environment (through pollution and contamination) can result due to the increased potential for wastewater overflows and strict water quality thresholds of treated effluent at disposal sites failing to be achieved.
- 1.4** It should also be noted that in some instances, the systems experience increased flows upward and to capacity due to peak holiday periods where increased visitor activity occurs.
- 1.5** It is unsuitable to utilise or rely on relevant reserve CWMS funds for infrastructure upgrades associated with additional CWMS connections as these reserves have essentially been funded by existing landowners whose properties were part of the CWMS scope when it was originally designed and commissioned. It is inequitable for existing landowners to fund for upgrades that are required to the CWMS as a result of new connections, and not from their own direct use.
- 1.6** Therefore, to avoid the problems and grievances as described above, all applications for additional connection must be accompanied by report from an independent, suitably qualified engineer with CWMS design or wastewater experience supporting the connection, or advising what additional measures are required to enable connection.

- 1.7 The only exception to this Policy is additional connection points into the Truro CWMS. As Truro eventually connects into the Stockwell WWTP, additional connections in Truro will be assessed on a case-by-case basis through consultation with the Barossa Council (owner and operator of the Stockwell WWTP).

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 **“CWMS Capacity Upgrade Fee”** refers to the costs associated with the requisite works to upgrade/add to the current CWMS and associated infrastructure in order to accommodate the additional connections as determined by the independent, suitably qualified engineer.
- 2.2 **“CWMS Connection Fee”** refers to the relevant fee which ‘contributes’ towards any upgrades, maintenance and upkeep of the CWMS and associated infrastructure that is required as a result of normal operation of the CWMS as a whole (following the installation of new connections). Please refer to Council’s Fees & Charges Register for the relevant CWMS Connection Fee.

## 3. Procedure

### 3.1 The applicant/developer to engage an independent, suitably qualified engineer

The applicant/developer is to engage, at their expense, an independent, suitably qualified engineer with CWMS design or wastewater experience to investigate whether the CWMS in its current capacity can accommodate the proposed number of additional connections, and if not, what upgrades are required to the system so that the additional loading can be accommodated. This report will need to be forwarded for review and accepted by Council.

**Please note**, Council reserves the right to engage, at its discretion and own expense, an independent, suitably qualified engineer with CWMS design or wastewater experience should the findings handed down by the engineer engaged by the applicant/developer be of an unsatisfactory or substandard nature.

### 3.2 Council to arrange and facilitate Department for Health and Wellbeing (DHW) approval if required, applicant/developer to pay to Council all associated fees

If Department for Health and Wellbeing (DHW) approval is required for the additional connections to the CWMS, (as the original CWMS approval may need to be amended) this process will need to be performed by Council and any costs associated with this process will be borne by the applicant/developer and paid in full to Council prior to the commencement of this process. Any additional costs for requisite works as required/conditioned by the DHW approval (such as as-constructed plans/surveys, engineering certification, hydrostatic testing, as the case may be) must be borne by the applicant/developer and paid to Council. A preferred contractor will then be engaged by Council to perform the relevant works when required (following completion of upgrade work as per step 3.3).

### 3.3 Council to engage preferred contractor to perform necessary upgrades, applicant/developer to pay to Council “CWMS Capacity Upgrade Fee”

In the case that an upgrade to the system is required, as identified by the engineering report and subsequent review and acceptance by Council, the full cost of such upgrade will be borne by the applicant/developer and paid to Council (“CWMS Capacity Upgrade Fee”). Council will then engage a preferred contractor to perform the necessary upgrades. The CWMS Capacity Upgrade Fee must be paid in full to Council prior to the issuing of any relevant Development and/or Wastewater Approval and prior to any works commencing.

### 3.4 Council to engage preferred contractor to install CWMS connection point/s, applicant/developer to pay to Council “CWMS Connection Fee”

In addition to any costs associated with the upgrade of the CWMS, the applicant/developer will also be required to pay to Council a capital contribution (the “CWMS Connection Fee”) for each additional connection point. Council will then again engage a preferred contractor to install the new connection point/s. The CWMS Connection Fee must be paid in full to Council prior to the issuing of any relevant Development and/or Wastewater Approval and prior to any works commencing.

Please refer to [Council's Fees & Charges Register](#) for the relevant CWMS Connection Fee.

**Please note:** Habitable buildings other than a single detached dwelling, including but not limited to, multiple dwellings or tourist accommodation, and commercial premises, will be each subjected to a CWMS Connection Fee that is equivalent to the intended use of each building/premises, regardless of whether only connected to the CWMS via a single connection. The actual CWMS Connection Fee for each building/premises in this scenario will be subject to an assessment and determined on a case-by-case basis.

## 4. Policy Responsibility

This Policy will be administered on behalf of Council by the Director of Infrastructure & Field Services, as the assessor and decision maker of CWMS Connection applications.

## 5. Availability/Accessibility

- 5.1 This Policy and Council's Fees and Charges Register are available to be downloaded free of charge from Council's website: [www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au](http://www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au).
- 5.2 This Policy is available for inspection at Council's principal office during ordinary business hours. Hard copies, for a fee in accordance with Council's schedule of Fees and Charges, can be provided upon request.

## 6. Legislative Framework / Other References

- 6.1 [Local Government Act 1999](#)

## 7. Document History

This Policy shall be reviewed at least every four (4) years or more frequently if legislation or Council requires.

Version	Adopted	Minute	Description of Change
1	10 March 2020	20914/1	Adopted
2	27 April 2023		Policy added to new template, no changes.