



## GUIDELINES TO INSTALLING A SEPTIC TANK & SOAKAGE SYSTEM

### Information about the septic tank and soakage system

This is one of the most common forms of waste control systems. The wastewater flows to the septic tank where the sludge, fats and oils are separated from the liquid. This liquid then flows to a sub-surface soakage system which is most commonly the soakage trench.

### Soakage Trenches

The common forms are the tunnel system using plastic tunnel or the perforated pipe system.

The soakage trench can be installed in single or multiple runs depending on the size of the allotment and direction of landfall.

The minimum length of trench is 45m by 1.2m in width for the tunnel system.

The minimum length of trench for the perforated pipe system is 50m by 1.2m in width.

A septic tank with a capacity of 3000L has been designed so that it needs to be desludged every 4 years. If the capacity of the septic tank is increased, then the desludging frequency will also change.

To ensure the septic tank and soakage system is working efficiently, no person shall permit or cause any of the following discharges into the septic system:

- Any stormwater, including roof and rainwater tank overflow and surface drainage waters;
- Any backflush water from a swimming pool or water softener;
- Any discharge or backflush from a spa bath/pool in excess of 680L capacity;
- Any sanitary napkin, clothing, plastic material or liner;
- Any trade waste;
- Any petrol or other flammable or explosive substance whether solid, liquid or gaseous;
- Any disinfectant or deodorant, antiseptic or germicide powder or fluid, unless specifically stated to be suitable for use in a septic tank.

### Information to be provided to Council to obtain approval

#### An application form

The application form **must** be completed and signed by both the owner and applicant.

#### Application Fee

An application fee payable to the Council.

New development (excluding transportable dwellings) \$507.00  
 New development (transportable dwellings & new shacks) ..... \$377.00  
 Upgrading or repair of waste control system ..... \$247.00

This application fees covers the examination of the application to ensure it complies with the current legal regulations, the approval and inspections of both pre-approval and of the installed system.

### Soil Report

A soil report must be provided to determine whether the soil is able to handle sub surface soakage. Some soils are high in clay and therefore unable to be used for soakage.

### Site Layout Plan

Sited site layout plan drawn to scale of 1 in 500 must be included with your application that details:

- Block dimensions
- Contours indicating natural ground fall
- Proposed location of the building and all other structures including sheds, swimming pools and paving etc
- Position of the proposed septic tank and soakage area showing all setback distance from boundaries, buildings including sheds, paving and swimming pools.
- Details of any site modification eg benching, cutting and filling.
- Details and location of any diversion trenches to collect surface or migrating subsurface water

- Details and location of storm, surface and roof water disposal
- Details of any well, bore, dam used or likely to be used for human and or domestic use
- Details of any water source used for agricultural, aquacultural or stock purposes
- Details of any water course, identified on a current 1:50 000 Department of Environment and Water topographic map, used or likely to be used for human and or domestic purposes.

### Building Layout Plan (Plumbing plan)

A detailed building layout plan drawn to a scale of 1 in 100 must be included with your application that details:

- The position and description of all sanitary fixtures to be connected to the septic tank system – e.g. toilets, basin, showers, bath, laundry, kitchen
- The method of connecting the fixtures to the drainage systems including location of the drains, positions and size of traps – sanitary fixture, floor waste and overflow relief gully, vents and waste pipes.
- Whether there is a spa bath that is more than 120 litres or there is a food waste disposal unit installed.

### Maintenance of Septic Tank

To ensure your septic system is working properly it is important to look after your system. Septic tanks should:

- Be desludged every 4 years.
- Regularly be checked for any debris, grass or tree roots from around the lid area and removed.
- Strong bleaches or detergents should not be placed down the septic system.

Council cannot issue approval until:

- a completed application form, signed by the owner and applicant, has been submitted;
- an application fee has been submitted;
- a site layout plan has been submitted;
- a building layout plan detailing all plumbing has been submitted.

Failure to provide this information will result in delays in approval.

For further information contact the Development & Environmental Services Section of the Mid Murray Council on 08 8564 6020.

### Information Sheets

Information Sheets are available to help answer many of your Planning enquiries.

We also have many Information Guides available regarding Planning and Building Issues.

These Information Guides are available from our Cambrai, Mannum and Morgan offices. You can also see them on our website at [www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au](http://www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au)



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