



TITLE: COUNCIL POLICY – SEPTIC TANK DESLUDGE PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE

The primary objectives of this Policy are:-

- The responsible management of wastewater assets, including privately owned septic tanks throughout the district;
- To protect Council's wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure; and
- To protect properties connected to the wastewater collection network.

2. SCOPE

This Policy is applicable to all properties connected to Council's Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS).

3. POLICY PRINCIPLES – OUR COMMITMENT

To protect both Council wastewater infrastructure and private property infrastructure Council will:

- Desludge septic tanks connected to Council's wastewater system once every five years (other than those as listed below).
- Desludge septic tanks servicing units connected to Council's wastewater system with undersized septic tanks (as listed on the unit desludging list) at a frequency determined by the Team Leader Network Operations.

Council reviews and sets the CWMS Service Charge on an annual basis. This charge is advised to the landowner on their rates notice.

Revenue received via CWMS Service Charges will be effectively managed to fund the septic tank desludge program as part of the overall operation and maintenance of the CWMS that services several townships in the District.

4. DEFINITIONS

CWMS - Community Waste Management System. The CWMS takes liquid wastewater (effluent) from properties that have a septic tank to a treatment plant for further treatment and reuse/disposal.

Desludge - To remove all the sludge / solids contents of the septic tanks located on private property.

Septic tank - A concrete, brick or plastic tank located between the last wastewater fixture and the Council CWMS connection point and is used to provide sufficient time for the biological breakdown of solid materials.

Wastewater Service - The Council owned and operated Wastewater Service providing wastewater, bore water and recycled water services to connected customers in the district

5. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Council:

- To adopt a policy and ensure appropriate budget is provided to responsibly manage the septic tank desludge program.

Chief Executive Officer:

- To ensure that sufficient resources are applied for the delivery of wastewater services within the community.

General Managers:

- To ensure the relevant Officer is responsible for supervising the septic tank desludge program.

Team Leader Network Operations:

- To maintain the septic tank desludge program and to keep the Manager Water Operations and Head of Wastewater informed of factors which might impact the delivery of services or the programs status

Landowner:

- To undertake the desludging of their septic tank in between the Council's scheduled service if required.
- To undertake desludging when required if the property is not connected to Council's wastewater system.
- Required to expose the septic tank lid on written request from Council or its Agent.
- On completion of the desludging of the septic tank, reinstating any disturbed ground.
- Taking all reasonable steps to make open excavations on their property safe until the excavation is backfilled.
- Decommissioning of the existing septic tank, including ensuring adequate compaction of the ground if the septic tank is removed or filled in if the property is connected directly to Council's wastewater network as a sewer connection.

6. POLICY STATEMENT

The Mount Barker District Council Wastewater Service is committed to providing a high standard of wastewater and recycled water services to the district and desludging of septic tanks that are connected to the CWMS is an important component of this service.

7. TRAINING / EDUCATION

Information available on the council website on septic tanks, and other forms of onsite wastewater treatment, and additional information distributed with notice letters to properties due to have their septic tank desludged.

8. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed:

- every three years; or
- the frequency dictated in legislation, or
- earlier in the event of changes to legislation or related Policies and Procedures or ;
- if deemed necessary by the Head of Wastewater.

9. ACCESS TO THE POLICY

The Policy is available for public inspection at the Customer Service Centre, at the Local Government Centre, 6 Dutton Road, Mount Barker, South Australia and on the Council's website www.mountbarker.sa.gov.au

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on this Policy, please contact:

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INTERNAL GOVERNANCE:			
Author	Simon Plush	Manager Water Operations	13 December 2023
Responsible General Manager:	Helen Edmonds	Head of Wastewater	28 February 2024
REVIEWED BY CEO	Andrew Stuart		28 February 2024
APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS:	SA Public Health Act (Wastewater) Regulations 2013 Water Industry Act 2012		
COMMUNITY PLAN 2020-2035 REFERENCE:	<p>CW Objective 4.4 – Provide wastewater treatment services to deliver public health, environmental and economic outcomes and climate change adaptation solutions.</p> <p>ES Objective 5.1 – Continue to build on Council’s reputation as a leader in wastewater management and promote water recycling and reuse</p> <p>EP Objective 3.4 – Support and facilitate quality, sustainable residential and commercial development including iconic public and private building development in town centres.</p>		
REVIEW CYCLE	<p>This Policy will be reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - every three years; or - the frequency dictated in legislation, or - earlier in the event of changes to legislation or related Policies and Procedures or ; - if deemed necessary by the Head of Wastewater <p>It is recognised that from time to time circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name or a State or Federal Department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be by resolution of Council (if statutory) or the Chief Executive Officer (if administrative).</p>		
NEXT REVIEW DATE	28 February 2027		
DOCUMENT HISTORY:			
DOCUMENT VERSION	DATE	AUTHOR (PERSON TO WHOM CHANGES ARE TO BE RECOMMENDED)	NATURE OF CHANGE
VERSION 1.0	28 February 2024	Helen Edmonds	Administrative changes

VERSION 2.0			
VERSION 3.0			
DOCUMENT LOCATION:	Council website 1 March 2024 Available for inspection, downloading or printing from our website www.mountbarker.sa.gov.au		
	This Policy is available for inspection, during business hours at: Mount Barker District Council, Level 1, 6 Dutton Road, Mount Barker		