

SUITABLE WASTEWATER SYSTEM

Properties that are not located within areas serviced by reticulated sewerage must treat and dispose of wastewater within the boundaries of the property that generates the wastewater. No individual properties are ever the same and the location and size of buildings also varies. For these reasons it is often difficult (particularly on properties smaller in area than 1000m²) to state that the property is 'suitable for septic tank system'

While all advice and recommendations in this document are made in good faith, neither the Sorell Council nor any other person associated with the preparation of this document accepts legal liability or responsibility for the advice or recommendations therein or for the consequences of relying on such advice or recommendations. You should satisfy yourself that any information you rely on from any source is appropriate for your own particular circumstances.

Note: Do not however, automatically assume that if an application has been refused / approved to install a septic tank system, that approval for an alternative system will be given.



Environment & Development
Department
Sorell Council
47 Cole Street, Sorell 7172
Ph: (03) 6269 0000

INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE PURCHASERS OF LAND IN AREAS OUTSIDE OF SEWERAGE DISTRICTS



Environment & Development
Department

Sorell Council
47 Cole Street, Sorell 7172

Ph: (03) 6269 0000
Fax: (03) 6269 0014
Email: sorell.council@sorell.tas.gov.au
Web: www.sorell.tas.gov.au

ONSITE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT



Much of the land subdivided in Primrose Sands and Dodges Ferry (and other areas) was subdivided over 30 years ago before the time when consideration of the lots

suitability for septic tank systems was part of the criteria used for determination of whether subdivisions would be approved or not. In addition, standards used for assessment of a properties suitability for wastewater disposal has continued to change over years in response to the number of septic tank systems that are not working effectively and changing community public health and environmental standards.

It is therefore possible that some properties may not be suitable for any type of on-site waste management system at all. In these cases increasing the land area (if possible) by adhering one or more blocks or a boundary adjustment to purchase some land off a neighbor may provide sufficient area for wastewater disposal. Please remember that provision for future absorption trenches and setback/buffer distances to sensitive features must be included within all designs for wastewater disposal systems.

Australian Standard AS/NZS 1547-2012 On-site Domestic Wastewater Management includes considerable information on the design, operation and construction of wastewater disposal systems. It is recommended that this standard be consulted when designing systems. Several consultants in Tasmania have specialized skills in designing on-site disposal systems.

A property will only be suitable for a septic tank system or other type of on-site wastewater management if an application has been lodged and a permit issued. If an application has not been made previously then the only way a decision can be made is for an application to be submitted. This application must include a design of an on-site wastewater management system that is based on the site conditions ie. from the site and soil evaluation report prepared by a consultant such as a: Geologist, Soil Scientist or Engineer. The plan submitted may be a hypothetical design but at least if a permit is issued for this proposal it will indicate that wastewater disposal from the proposed type of development is acceptable or not. For advice on treatment of land required for wastewater treatment refer to Schedule 12 of *Sorell Planning Scheme 1993*. On small properties (less than 1000m²) the size and number of bedrooms may be a significant determinant in whether a permit will or will not be issued.

The greater the number of bedrooms the higher the potential occupancy and in turn the higher the design wastewater flow rate will be (the amount of wastewater generated). Absorption trenches (and other disposal areas) are sized mainly on the absorptive capacity of the soil and the volume of wastewater generated. For this reason the size of trenches for a 1-2 bedroom house may vary considerably compared with a 4 bedroom house. Therefore, the number of occupants is determined by the number of bedrooms in the house and the volume of wastewater is calculated based on the number of occupants. It is important to recognize that approval to install a septic tank is not a generic approval, but a specific approval for a proposed development (house). If the site is not suitable for a septic tank system other alternatives such as a waterless toilet (eg: composting toilets), aerated wastewater treatment system (AWTS) or septic tanks with modified land application areas (above ground beds or mounds) may be suitable. Technologies continue to be developed, however, not all of these new systems have sought approval for use in Tasmania.

Before any on-site system can be installed a Permit must be obtained from Council.

