

# Information package for relevant stakeholders on installing or altering on-site wastewater management systems (OWMS)

## 1. Application Process

Anyone wishing to install/alter an on-site wastewater management system (i.e. increasing the number of bedrooms etc.) or any other system of treating and disposing of domestic wastewater (i.e. composting toilets or sewage treatment plants etc.), must first apply to the council for a Permit using the online form "[Application for a permit to install or alter a wastewater system](#)" – You may like to consult a plumber first as they can advise you on this.

## 2. Information for owners/applicants/plumbers/drainers

Under Section 46 *Environment Protection Act 2017* - "a person must not engage in a prescribed permit activity except as authorised by a permit in respect of the activity." or has been granted an exemption under Section 83.

Construction, installation or alteration of an on-site wastewater management system is specified as a prescribed permit activity in the Act. The plumber or drainer for an onsite wastewater treatment and disposal system is responsible for this, whether or not they have submitted the application to install/alter a wastewater system.

## 3. Guide to Land Capability Assessment (LCA)

An LCA report demonstrates to Council that the proposed development is capable of sustainably managing wastewater within the property boundaries. The LCA will specify the type of on-site wastewater management system and the area required for the dispersal of treated wastewater and may also set out ongoing maintenance or testing requirements for an on-site wastewater management system.

- A list of local consultants
- A list of local wastewater servicing agents

## 4. Requirements of Site/OWMS Plan and Examples

## 5. Questions?

Enquiries regarding the installation or alterations to septic tank systems or wastewater treatment systems should be directed to the Environmental Health Officer on (03) 5358 8700 or by email ([health@ngshire.vic.gov.au](mailto:health@ngshire.vic.gov.au)).

### CONTACT US

-  [ngshire@ngshire.vic.gov.au](mailto:ngshire@ngshire.vic.gov.au)
-  [www.ngshire.vic.gov.au](http://www.ngshire.vic.gov.au)
-  (03) 5358 8700
-  PO Box 580 Stawell VIC 3380

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## Application Process

1. The application form must be signed by either the owner or agent for the owner and accompanied by full details of the proposed system together with plans and specifications, requirements for which are detailed on the application form. All parts of the form must be completed. A copy of the Council's planning permit should be included with the application.
2. Applications will not be considered until the required fees have been paid.
3. All owners or their agents should be advised that no work is to commence until a written permit to install/alter has been issued by the Environmental Health Officer. In certain situations, you may need to apply for a *Regulation 132 Consent* and Report under the *Building Regulations 2018* to get approval in principle prior to applying for a "Permit to Install" so that building work can proceed before the wastewater system design is finalised.
4. As part of the assessment of the application, the Environmental Health Officer may need to visit the site. Therefore the application should include details and directions, if necessary, regarding site locality and accessibility. If the gate is normally locked please provide a contact number to gain entry to the property.
5. For all systems full technical details of the type of system including the *Certificate of Conformance* under the appropriate section of *Australian Standard 1546* must be lodged. Off-site discharges of effluent will not be permitted.
6. A Land Capability Assessment prepared by an appropriately qualified person must be included with the application if the property is located within the Wimmera River catchment area (areas south of and including Glenorchy and Navarre), the property is less than 1 ha in size or you have been advised that one is required by Council. The assessment must include a management program for the proposed system.
7. Council reserves the right to require further supporting information including soil percolation tests and further land capability assessments to be undertaken in accordance with the *Code of Practice Onsite Wastewater Management*, before considering any application.
8. All plumbing work on a wastewater system must be undertaken by a registered plumber. A copy of any certificate of compliance issued to the owner pursuant to the *Building Act 1993* must be lodged with the council on completion of works with an as-laid drainage plan of the installation or alteration.
9. The wastewater system must not be used until a certificate approving the use of the system, is issued by the Environmental Health Officer pursuant to Regulation 33 *Environment Protection Regulations 2021*. This certificate will not be issued until a copy of the plumbing certificate of compliance is received with the as-laid drainage plans.
10. Inspection requirements:
  - At least 48 hours notice is to be given for inspections of works being carried out
  - When tanks are installed and trenches dug and material installed prior to backfilling
  - When all works are completed.

Note: If the plumber/drainer nominated by you is unavailable to do the work, please advise the name of the plumber who will be undertaking the installation before work commences.

Inspections can be organised by contacting Council's Environmental Health Department by email ([health@ngshire.vic.gov.au](mailto:health@ngshire.vic.gov.au)) or by calling (03) 5358 8700. Please include your name, phone number, address of the proposed installation or permit number and the date and time you want the inspection. An officer will get back to you to confirm the inspection. The work must not be backfilled until the inspection has been completed or has been specifically approved by the authorised officer.



## Information for Owners/Applicants/Plumbers/Drainers

### 1. What do I need to know before starting work?

- Before starting work you need to ensure that you have a copy of the permit to install/alter the wastewater system and the approved plan. Remember that alterations require a permit even if it is just the addition of an ensuite bathroom. General maintenance of the system does not require a permit.
- Read all the conditions on the permit and make sure the approved plan is the same as your intended installation. Contact the authorised officer that signed the permit to install for further information or if anything needs changing before starting work.

Please note: If the approved plan or system design is to be changed significantly, an application to alter the permit will be required.

### 2. What inspections are required of the wastewater system?

Inspections are required on all wastewater installations and alterations.

- If you are not the applicant, make sure it is clear to your employer whether you or they are expected to contact Council to organise the inspections.
- If the applicant will be organising inspections, the installer must ensure that they give more than 48 hours' notice to submit the requested documents for inspections.
- Make sure the gate is accessible.

### 3. How to get the “Approval to Use” certificate of a Wastewater System?

If you are the applicant or responsible for obtaining the “Approval to Use” certificate, the following items are required to send a copy to Council’s Environmental Health Department ([health@ngshire.vic.gov.au](mailto:health@ngshire.vic.gov.au)).

- **An accurate and scaled ‘as laid plan’**(if the system has been installed differently from the approved plan) must be submitted. The plan must show all below-ground drains, trenches and irrigation lines. All inspection openings are to be included with accurate measurements of all drains and locations of distribution pits, trenches and valve boxes for irrigation. (see attached example of system plan).
- **Copy of VBA Plumbers Compliance Certificates** for all sanitary drains as well as wastewater disposal systems. For some alterations, you may find that a compliance certificate is required for less than \$750 works. If this condition is on the permit, a compliance certificate will be required.
- **Copy of the Commissioning Certificate** for any aerated wastewater treatment unit installed.
- Make sure all works have been completed in accordance with the “Permit to Install/Alter” and the system is ready to be used.
- When this information is received, a final inspection of the system will be carried out and the ‘Approval to Use’ application will be processed by an authorised officer. Another final inspection may be required if the trenches are installed before the rest of the sanitary drains or treatment unit/septic tank. You must also ensure access is provided to the site, i.e. unlocked gate etc.

Please note: Failure to provide the above information or provide access to the site may result in untimely delays.



#### 4. What are the requirements after receiving an “Approval to Use” certificate?

- There are legal obligations set out in the *Environment Protection Regulations 2021* for the maintenance of the system. Please see [Guidance for owners and occupiers of land with an OWMS ≤ 5000 litres on any day \(including septic tank systems\)](https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/guidance-for-owners-and-occupiers-of-land-with-an-owms-5000-litres-on-any-day-including-septic-tank-systems) ([epa.vic.gov.au](https://www.epa.vic.gov.au))
- The OWMS is required to be maintained every 3 months.
- The following list is not a recommendation for any of the servicing agents listed below, nor a guarantee that the quality of work provided will be satisfactory.
- The council will not be held responsible for any issues that may arise due to an inadequate service being conducted or any costs (financial or other) that may be incurred during the service and maintenance process.
- Property owners can work with agents not included on this list.

Company	Address	Phone	Website/Email
<b>All Brands Servicing</b>	30 Hammond Court Hopetoun Park VIC 3340	03 5367 7646 0429 141 151	<a href="http://www.allbrandsservicing.com.au">www.allbrandsservicing.com.au</a>
<b>Wimmera Wastewater Treatment</b>	47 Schier Drive Haven VIC 3401	0419 505 783	<a href="http://www.wimmerawastewater.com.au">www.wimmerawastewater.com.au</a>
<b>Grampians Septic Tank Cleaning</b>	1 Holloway Rd West, Stawell VIC 3380	0417 352 706	<a href="mailto:pjones@netconnect.com.au">pjones@netconnect.com.au</a>
<b>S &amp; D Septic Waste Treatment Systems Pty Ltd</b>	Fcty 5/ 146 High Street, Melton VIC 3337	03 9747 0201 1300 363 405	
<b>Central Septics Castlemaine</b>		03 5420 1582	<a href="http://www.centrasepticscastlemaine.com.au">www.centrasepticscastlemaine.com.au</a>
<b>Sepserve</b>	16 Piper Road East Bendigo VIC 3550	1300 364 428	<a href="http://www.sepsolve.com.au">www.sepsolve.com.au</a>
<b>Statewide Waste Pty Ltd</b>	355 Koroit St, Warrnambool VIC 3280	03 5561 1195	
<b>Central Vic Septic Services</b>	33 Bakewell St Bendigo VIC 3550	0438 428 714	<a href="http://www.centralvicsepticsservices.com.au">www.centralvicsepticsservices.com.au</a>
<b>Strathfieldsaye Plumbing</b>	12 Rohs Road Bendigo, VIC 3550	03 5444 4700	<a href="http://www.strathfieldsayeplumbing.com.au">www.strathfieldsayeplumbing.com.au</a>
<b>Icon Septech Servicing</b>	11 Industrial Drive Pakenham, VIC 3810	1300 305 073	<a href="http://www.iconseptech-vic.com.au">www.iconseptech-vic.com.au</a>
<b>Wastewater Systems Pty Ltd</b>	155 Inglis St, Ballan, VIC 3342	1800 020 093	<a href="http://www.wastewateraus.com.au">www.wastewateraus.com.au</a>



# Guide to Land Capability Assessment (LCA)

## 1. What is it?

- Land Capability Assessments (LCA) are evaluations undertaken by a private consultant to determine the ability of your lot or subdivision to sustainably and safely dispose of wastewater.
- An LCA is specific to each application. It seeks to identify the constraints presented by each lot and provide a management strategy to overcome any issues if it is possible.
- LCAs are a means of supporting your application to the local government to install or alter an onsite domestic wastewater system.
- If your lot is incapable of supporting wastewater disposal in a manner that is sustainable and safe, the LCA will state this.
- However, there is usually a viable solution to wastewater management for most properties and the land capability assessor should evaluate all wastewater options available to assist you.

## 2. What are the requirements for an LCA?

An LCA must:

- Be prepared by a suitably qualified person, generally a soil scientist or other geotechnically qualified person.
- Comply with the requirements of the EPA Code of Practice: Onsite Waste Water Management.
- Be applicable to the site where the wastewater management system is being installed.

## 3. Why does Council ask for an LCA for some sites and not others?

There is a range of situations where an LCA becomes necessary:

- Development within drinking or special water catchments. i.e. if the property is located within the Wimmera River catchment area (areas south of and including Glenorchy and Navarre).
- In areas where Council knows that there are highly variable soil types.
- In areas where Council doesn't know about the soil types.
- Where a plumber isn't confident in the exact system configuration to suit the site.
- Where the property size or location makes it likely that any failure would quickly affect the environment or other people.
- In any other situation where Council considers there are risks that require specialist advice.

## 4. An LCA has already been produced for my block. Do I need a new one?

- LCAs are documents written for a specific application at a particular time. Generally, LCAs will not be relevant to an application other than the one it was written to support.
- If you have had an LCA undertaken on your property, the current circumstances on your block may not remain the same and may not have been adequately assessed.
- Therefore, you may require a new LCA. Sometimes it is possible for your land capability assessor to amend or adjust an existing LCA.
- In order to determine what you will require, consult your local Environmental Health Officer.

## 5. When will I need an LCA?

You may require an LCA when:

- Proposing a subdivision in an unsewered area;
- Applying to install an onsite domestic wastewater management system in an environmentally sensitive area;
- Applying to install an onsite domestic wastewater management system on a property with significant site constraints;
- Applying to install particular types of onsite domestic wastewater management systems where a Land Capability Assessment is a condition of the Certificate of Approval;
- Applying to install an onsite domestic wastewater management system for use with an unusual proposal.



## 6. What should I expect from an LCA provider?

As with many services, the cheapest isn't always the best, ask for examples of work they have done or to be able to speak to past clients. All LCAs must provide sufficient detail of all aspects of the risk assessment, along with a comprehensive rationale for all proposed management strategies. The following is a general guide of what you might expect to be included in an LCA.

- **Executive Summary** – provides a summary of the report with all key points listed;
- **Introduction** – an introduction to the report, describing the purpose and the subject;
- **Background** – an overview, any objectives, background and limitations of the report;
- **Site Information** – location, property title, lot size, planning zones and overlays, historical and proposed land use, features and use of surrounding land;
- **Key Site Features** – a detailed description and discussion of topography, soil types, climate, vegetation, drainage, the propensity of flooding, proximity to catchment areas, and all relevant site constraints;
- **Infrastructure** – all existing and proposed services and their locations. Services may include electricity, telephone, water, gas, sewerage and access;
- **Property Use Features** – livestock, horticultural activities, location and use of dams and bores, location of the building envelope, water use, impacts of the proposed development;
- **Land Capability** – land capability assessment matrix producing a risk rating, soil permeability rates and management protocols;
- **Effluent Treatment and Design** – recommended wastewater treatment standards, wastewater system design and specifications, all relevant sizing calculations, and location of effluent disposal areas and reserve areas;
- **Management and Maintenance Protocols** – ongoing management and maintenance requirements;
- **Conclusion** – a summary of key findings and recommendations of the report;
- **About The Author** – details of those involved in developing the LCA;
- **Appendices** – aerial photographs, site photographs, supporting documentation and references;
- **Laboratory Data** – soil classification data and all testing details;
- **Maps** – locality map, site maps of existing and proposed features, proposed subdivision layout, buildings envelopes, and areas relevant to wastewater management.

## 7. Anything else to consider?

- Land Capability Assessments often require the completion of soil tests at a minimum of three locations around the site, digging down at least one metre.
- Consultations between the land owner and the assessor – the assessor should discuss with you what was found and the possible wastewater management system configurations that are possible and how they fit with your development plans for the site.
- Site assessments - the report should comply with the Municipal Association Victoria framework for LCAs.
- Update the LCA in response to any feedback from Council.
- The development of an LCA is a lengthy process and in some circumstances can take months to complete. If you have a strict timeline to maintain, be sure to keep this in mind.

## 8. Who can do it?

There is no licensing scheme currently in place for land capability assessors, so be sure to do your research and seek some local advice. You might like to take a look in the Yellow Pages at environmental consultants or surveyors, or alternatively contact us.

- The companies listed below have websites indicating they conduct soil testing, soil investigation and Land Capability Assessments.
- These businesses are not endorsed by Council and their names and contact details are provided as a point of reference only.
- **Disclaimer:** The council in no way recommends any particular service or the quality of service provided. Other service providers may be available and it is the applicant's responsibility to select an appropriate service provider.



Company	Address	Phone	Website
<b>PM Design Group</b>	482 Three Bridges Road McKenzie Creek Horsham VIC 3401	03 5382 0202	<a href="http://www.pmdesign.com.au">www.pmdesign.com.au</a>
<b>Provincial Geotechnical Pty Ltd</b>	8 Claxton St Ballarat Central VIC 3350	03 5338 1770	<a href="http://www.pgvic.com.au">www.pgvic.com.au</a>
<b>Ballarat Soil Testing</b>	301 Simpson Street, Buninyong 3357	0419 536 910	<a href="http://www.ballaratsoiltesting.com">www.ballaratsoiltesting.com</a>
<b>Colin McClelland &amp; Associates</b>	201 Armstrong Street North, Ballarat 3350	5333 3030	<a href="http://www.mcclellands.com.au">www.mcclellands.com.au</a>
<b>BSE Consulting</b>	Level 1 61-63 Yarra St Geelong Vic 3220	03 5221 5776	<a href="http://www.bseconsulting.com.au">www.bseconsulting.com.au</a>
<b>Holmes McLeod Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd</b>	451 Raglan Parade, Warrnambool 3280	5562 9990	<a href="http://www.holmesmcLeod.com.au">www.holmesmcLeod.com.au</a>
<b>GEO Testa</b>	7 Business Park Drive, Notting Hill, VIC 3168	03 9562 8808	<a href="http://www.geotesta.com.au">www.geotesta.com.au</a>
<b>A.S. James Pty Ltd</b>	15 Libbett avenue, Clayton South, VIC 3169	03 9547 4811	<a href="http://www.asjames.com.au">www.asjames.com.au</a>
<b>Structerre Consulting</b>	Unit 2, 228 Pakington Street, Geelong West VIC 3218	03 5229 0972	<a href="http://www.structerre.com.au">www.structerre.com.au</a>
<b>Land Capability Assessment Victoria</b>		0400 372 763	<a href="http://www.lcavictoria.com.au">www.lcavictoria.com.au</a>
<b>Wartook Woods Environmental Health</b>	83 Aughey Road Wartook VIC 3401	0409 133 685	
<b>Bruce Cossins &amp; Associates</b>	11 Coronet St, Wendouree VIC 3355	03 5333 4881	
<b>Bruce Hollioake</b>	102 Dawson St Sth, Ballarat VIC 3350	03 5338 8270	
<b>Philip Vawdrey Engineering</b>	294 Blind Creek Rd, Ballarat VIC 3350	03 5344 8033	
<b>Melbourne Geological Consultants</b>	PO Box 348, Greensborough 3088	03 9435 1698 0408 170 367	<a href="http://www.melbournesoiltestingservices.com">www.melbournesoiltestingservices.com</a>
<b>Geocentral Engineering</b>		0438 050 539	<a href="http://www.geocentral.com.au">www.geocentral.com.au</a>
<b>Strata Geoscience and Environmental Pty Ltd</b>		0413 545 358	<a href="http://www.strataconsulting.com.au">www.strataconsulting.com.au</a>
<b>Landtech Consulting</b>	161 Skene St, Warrnambool VIC 3280	0408 615 677	



## Requirements of Plans and Examples

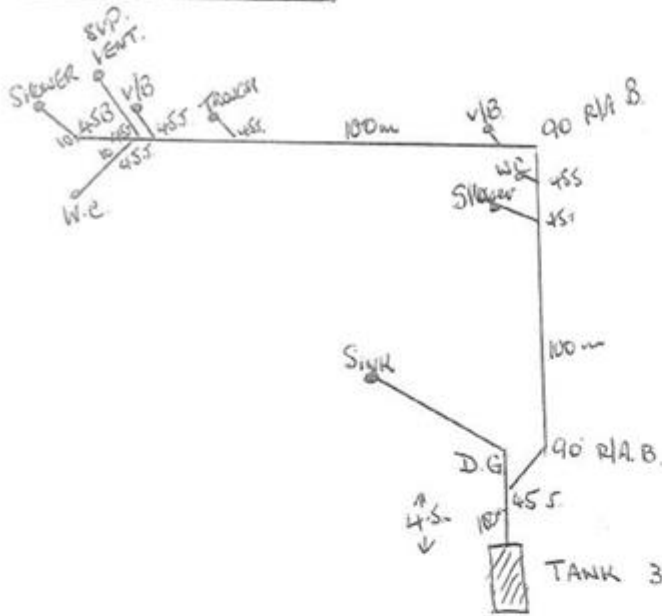
- **Site plan** - A site plan is to be enclosed with your application showing:
  1. A current copy of the title (including the diagram).
  2. A locality map, including details on how to locate and access the property:
    - a. The location of the premises including the street number or lot number and street name.
    - b. The dimensions of all boundaries and the location of all other streets and laneways which abut the property (show names if applicable).
    - c. The locations and dimensions of all buildings or proposed buildings, surface water occurrences (dams and creeks), water tanks, swimming pools, excavations, driveways, stormwater drains, water pipes and existing tank systems and underground power, water and telecommunications connections.
    - d. The location of the proposed septic tank or treatment plant, & effluent disposal system (including irrigation lines).
    - e. On hilly sites, an indication of surface runoff paths is also required.
    - f. Fall of the land.
    - g. The position & direction of the North.
- **System plan** - A detailed system plan of the building the septic is being installed/alterd for a block plan for the property to a scale of 1:500 or 1:200 that accurately identifies:
  1. Location of the house, shed(s), pools, driveway, drainage lines and underground power.
  2. Location of the proposed septic tank/wastewater treatment system and the layout of the proposed effluent disposal area as well as the reserved disposal area.
  3. Irrigation plans should indicate the location of all taps, valves and flush points, whether the system is sub-surface or of the drip irrigation type and the distance between drippers.
  4. Location of natural watercourses, dams, vegetation, trees
  5. Location of a grease interceptor, inspection chamber, stormwater drains, septic tank, distribution pits and overflow relief gully.
  6. Fall of the land and direction of north.

**Please note:** Once a permit has been obtained, the planned effluent disposal field should be protected to prevent deterioration by building activities or vehicular traffic.

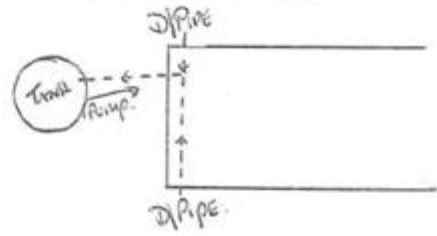




UNDER FLOOR SEWER



STORM WATER



SEPTIC PLAN

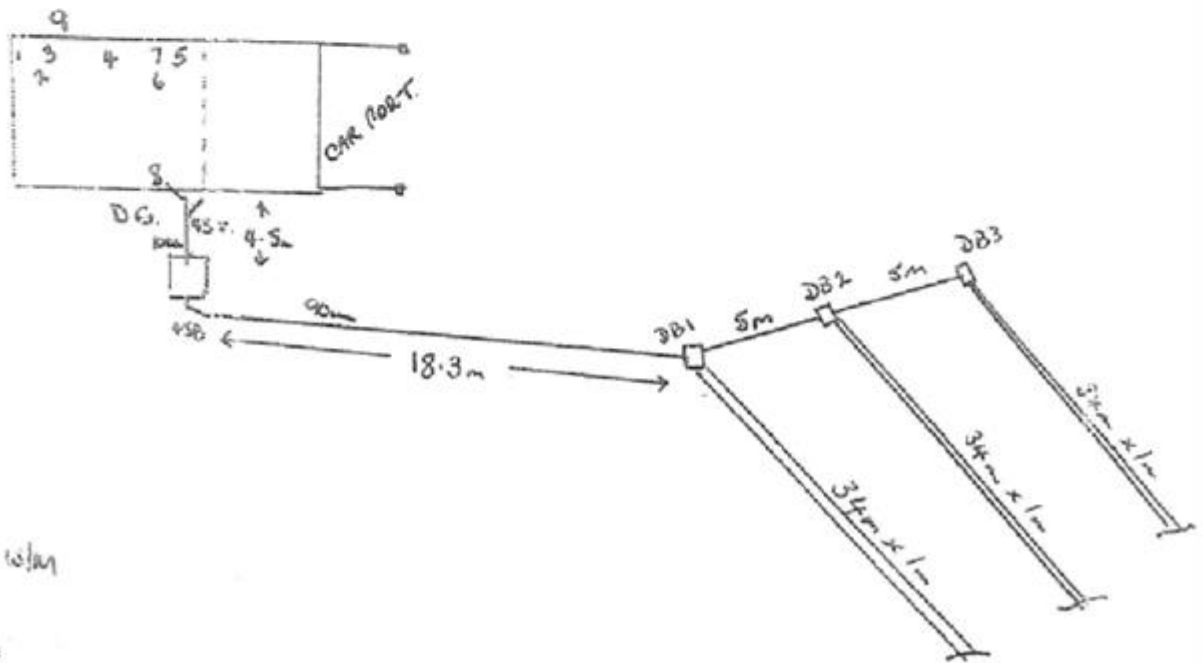
COMPLIANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**Lic. PLUMBER**

Tel. (03)  
Lic. No.  
ABN

o/o

CLIENT



- 1- SHOWER
- 2- W.C.
- 3- V/B
- 4- TROUGH W/W
- 5- W.C.
- 6- SHOWER
- 7- V/B
- 8- SINK
- 9- SVP.

