

# FACT SHEET

## On-site Sewerage Facilities or Septic Systems

Logan City Council (Council) is committed to providing residents, builders, developers and plumbers with information to property owners and tenants with requirements to maintain their existing on-site sewerage treatment facility or septic system.

Property owners and tenants responsibilities towards maintaining their existing on-site sewerage treatment facility or septic system include:-

- Ensuring the existing house drainage system is compliant, e.g. no broken pipes or tank leaks.
- Maintaining on-site sewerage facility or septic system by engaging a Service Agent to conduct quarterly repairs and proactive maintenance.
- Desludging tanks, pumps and drainage lines.
- If applicable, maintaining and protecting the land application area.
- Complying with the requirements of the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018*, and the *Plumbing and Drainage Regulations 2019* to provide Council with quarterly copies of service maintenance reports.

### Common Causes of Problems with Septic Systems

- 1. Full tank:** If you have a septic tank the sludge level of your tank should not be more than 2/3 full.
- 2. Too much sludge and scum in the tank:** Too much sludge and scum in your tank will eventually make the system fail, resulting in untreated contaminated wastewater with heavy solids flowing out of the tank. This can lead to a failure of the land application area, to ensure the operation of the land application area, tanks should be pumped out according to the sludge and scum levels.
- 3. Too much water going into the system:** This will cause the effluent to flow quickly through the tank, before the bacteria has a chance to breakdown solids. As a result, large particles will flow into and the land application area reducing its efficiency.
- 4. Toxic chemicals going into the system:** Chemicals like solvents, oils, paints, disinfectants, pesticides, household cleaning products and bleaches, can kill the good bacteria in your system. Only natural cleaners should be used and low phosphorus detergents to ensure the performance of the septic system remains effective.



### Common Causes of Problems with Land Application Area

- Ensure they are not installed in high traffic areas, e.g. do not drive on or disturb storm water diversion mounds.
- Do not build structures on the disposal area or plant trees that will shade the area.
- Avoid flooding the disposal area with sprinklers or hoses.
- Do not allow children to play in the area or animals to graze in the area.
- Avoid covering the area with concrete or pavers.
- Avoid storing earth material/soils on the disposal area.
- Do not add extra soil to the disposal area, as this often causes the area to become saturated. This can affect the performance and efficiency of the land application area.

**Logan City Council**

PO Box 3226 Logan Central QLD 4114

Document Reference: #12646197

**Phone:** 3412 3412

**Email:** [council@logan.qld.gov.au](mailto:council@logan.qld.gov.au)

**Web:** [www.logan.qld.gov.au](http://www.logan.qld.gov.au)

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### How does an On-site Sewerage Treatment Facility work?

They produce significantly higher water quality than a septic system, therefore less of an impact on the environment. The performance of an on-site sewerage treatment facility relies on having living bacteria in the storage tank. As this breaks down the effluent coupled with a consistent supply of oxygen, to help bacteria grow and treat the wastewater to a safe water quality. Like a septic system, what you use in your house hold determines the performance of your system. Too much water flowing into the system will cause the effluent to flow quickly through the tank, before the bacteria has a chance to work. This can result in large particles flowing into and clogging the land application area.

**Maintenance tips:** avoid toxic chemicals going into the on-site sewerage treatment facility like solvents, oils, paints, disinfectants, pesticides, household cleaning products and bleaches as these can kill good bacteria in your on-site sewerage treatment facility. Only natural cleaners should be used and low phosphorus detergents to ensure the performance of the on-site sewerage treatment facility is not affected.

### How can Logan residents report a possible non-compliant On-site Sewerage Treatment Facility or Septic System?

- Residents can call Council's Customer Service Centre on 3412 3412 to report a potential non-complaint on-site sewerage treatment facility or septic system.
- Once a complaint is received, the resident/complainant will be issued with a Customer Request number.
- Customer Request numbers can be quoted by the resident when inquiring about the status of their complaint.
- Council is committed to responding to Customer Requests within two business days.
- Investigations can be complex, e.g. possible water samples to be taken. Investigation outcomes can often take up to 20 business days to finalise, due to testing and collecting of evidence to determine compliance.
- Investigations can include, Council engaging directly with a property owner's Service Agent to determine the history and best way to ensure an on-site sewerage treatment facility or septic system achieves compliance.

### How to Lodge an On-site Sewerage Treatment Facility application

To obtain Council approval to install or change an on-site sewerage treatment facility or grey water facility, the property owner must submit a completed application form to Council for assessment. Completed forms can be emailed, posted or hand delivered at a Council Customer Service Centre. Application forms can be found on Council's website, ([www.logan.qld.gov.au](http://www.logan.qld.gov.au)) or at a Customer Service Centre. **A completed application submission includes:**

- Domestic Application Checklist (PDF format).
- Payment of the relevant assessment fee and charges as listed within Council's Fees and Charges schedule. An updated copy of Council's current Fees and Charges schedule can be found on Council's website by typing fees and charges into the search field, on Council's web page: [www.logan.qld.gov.au](http://www.logan.qld.gov.au).
- If applicable, supply a copy of a professional soil assessment and site evaluation report.
- A scaled site plan indicating the approximate location of the facility, and land application area.
- A completed Form 1 Permit Application for Plumbing, Drainage and On-Site Sewerage Work.

**In person:** Please refer to Council's website for the location of its offices and hours of operation, [www.logan.qld.gov.au](http://www.logan.qld.gov.au).

**General Information:** Should you require further information about your existing on-site sewerage facility or septic system, please call Council's Plumbing Services team on 3412 3412.

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