



## ON-SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

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Adopted by Council 12 November, 2014

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1998 the New South Wales Government introduced regulatory reforms and guidelines to enable effective Council regulation and supervision of domestic sewage management facilities. Council regulates the installation and operation of sewage management systems under the Local Government Act 1993 and Regulations.

Property owners are required to obtain an approval to install and operate a new system or to operate an existing system. The Regulations specify the performance standards to be complied with by owners when operating a system of sewage management as follows:

*A system of sewage management must be operated in a manner that achieves the following performance standards:*

- *the prevention of the spread of disease by micro-organisms,*
- *the prevention of the spread of foul odours,*
- *the prevention of contamination of water,*
- *the prevention of degradation of soil and vegetation,*
- *the discouragement of insects and vermin,*
- *ensuring that persons do not come into contact with untreated sewage or effluent (whether treated or not) in their ordinary activities on the premises concerned,*
- *the minimisation of any adverse impacts on the amenity of the premises and surrounding lands,*
- *if appropriate, provision for the re-use of resources (including nutrients, organic matter and water).*

*A system of sewage management must be operated:*

- *in accordance with the relevant operating specifications and procedures (if any) for the sewage management facilities used for the purpose, and*
- *to allow the removal of any treated sewage (and any by-product of any sewage) in a safe and sanitary manner.*

The strategy sets out to develop a way by which the requirements can be put into practice with minimum burden to Council and the community while achieving maximum benefits for the environment, public health and community amenity.

The goals of the strategy are to:

- ❑ minimise the impact of systems on the environment;
- ❑ identify the location of all systems in the Shire area;
- ❑ establish a partnership between stakeholders to support continuing improvement of on-site sewage management;

- ❑ educate owners about on-site sewage management systems;
- ❑ ensure owners are aware of the need to maintain their on-site sewage management systems;
- ❑ ensure owners of installations are aware of the need to hold current approvals;
- ❑ implement a cost effective method of supervision of on-site sewage management systems;
- ❑ provide for charging of fees for registrations and inspection, if Council so chooses; and
- ❑ create links between this strategy and Council's strategic planning process.

The strategy proposes a risk management approach that will allocate a low, medium or high risk rating to systems. Owners of low risk systems will not be required to renew their approval to operate. Owners of medium risk systems will consist of those systems with minor problems and be required to receive an inspection every three years, and owners of high risk systems will be required to renew their approval to operate and receive an inspection every two years.

The legislative reforms were implemented in response to surveys which indicated on-site sewage management systems were failing to meet environmental and health protection standards. The hepatitis A outbreak linked to the consumption of oysters from Wallis Lake and the risk in settlement areas of the Murray Darling Basin from septic tank effluent being examples.

Narromine Shire is a medium rural shire in Western NSW. Its population is 6,850. The two main settlement areas of Narromine and Trangie are sewered, but the remaining areas of the Shire, including the village of Tomingley rely on on-site sewage management systems.

Council proposes to implement this strategy over a period of time using the existing staff resources of its Environmental Services Department.

All installations will be required to comply with the performance standards set out in the Regulation.

Council will implement an inspection regime to ensure that the objectives of this strategy are achieved.

Initial risk assessments will be completed by desktop assessment. A 5% random target group of installations will be inspected to verify the accuracy of those assessments.

The results of the inspection regime will be reported in Council's State of the Environment Report.

Council proposes to establish three categories of risk, which will be applied to installations, high, medium and low. Installations will be assessed against indicative criteria for each category.

Provision is made for reviews of risk assessments.

Provision is made for re-categorisation of systems to a lower category over a period of time.

Council will maintain records of all applications, approvals and exemptions.

As required, notices of renewal will be sent to owners of systems required to hold current approvals.

A monitoring program will be established to ensure the efficiency of the strategy. This will include inspection of systems, assessing the integration of the strategy with Council's other strategic planning processes and assessing the effectiveness of the strategy against its objectives and goals.

Activities undertaken in accordance with this strategy will be reported in Council's annual State of the Environment Report.

The strategy is to be the subject of ongoing review, at least in the early stages, and subsequently on setting the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework documents.

## **DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of this strategy, the following definitions apply:

- ❑ Human waste storage facility means a device for holding or disposing of human waste, including a cesspit, septic tank, septic closet, water closet, chemical closet, humus closet and combustion closet.
- ❑ Operate a system of sewage management means hold or process, or re-use or otherwise dispose of; sewage or by-products of sewage (whether or not the sewage is generated on the premises on which the system of sewage management is operated). This includes:
  - a) use artificial wetlands, transpiration mounds, trenches, vegetation and the like in related effluent application areas;

- b) hold or process sewage that is to be subsequently discharged into a public sewer.

However, **operate a system of sewage management** does not include any of the following:

- (a) any action relating to the discharge of sewage directly into a public sewer,
  - (b) any action relating to sewage or by-products of sewage after their discharge into a public sewer.
- Related effluent application area, in relation to a sewage management facility, means the area of land (if any):
    - a) where it is intended to dispose of the effluent and any by-products of sewage from the facility, or
    - b) to which the effluent and by-products are intended to be applied.
  - Sewage includes effluent, being any matter or thing, whether solid or liquid or a combination of solids and liquids, which is of a kind that may be removed from a human waste storage facility, sullage pit or grease trap, or from any holding tank or other container forming part of or used in connection with a human waste storage facility, sullage pit or grease trap.

Sewage management facility means:

    - a) a human waste storage facility, or
    - b) a waste treatment device intended to process sewage, and includes a drain connected to such a facility or device.
  - The regulation means the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Legislative Changes**

The requirement to obtain approval to operate sewage management systems is not a new concept. Council had the power under the orders provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 to require remedial work to be carried out on faulty sewage management facilities however, this power was reactive to problems and did not seek to ensure problems did not occur as a result of operation of such systems.

Clause 43 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 prescribes the matters to be taken into consideration for approval to operate a system of sewage management. Likewise, Clause 26 of the Regulation prescribes the matters to accompany an application to install or construct sewage management systems. This means the owner of any land must obtain an approval of Council to install, construct or operate any on-site sewage management system(s) on their land.

### **1.2 Commencement**

Systems, which were installed after 6 April 1998 could not be operated unless such approval had been obtained.

Systems installed before 6 April 1998 were able to continue to be operated until 30 June 1999 without an application having been lodged. However, after that date, the system could not be operated unless an application was lodged with Council. If an application for approval to operate had been lodged with Council by that date then the system could continue to be used until such time as the application is finally determined by Council.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this strategy is to ensure that there is a system in place to provide oversight and control of on-site sewage management systems within the Shire. To achieve that objective, this strategy intends to ensure:

1. the protection of groundwater;
2. the protection of surface water;
3. the protection of land and vegetation;
4. the protection of public health and the prevention of public health risk;

5. the maintenance and improvement of community amenity;
6. the maximum re-use of resources consistent with other objectives.
7. the principles of ecological sustainable development, water cycle management and total catchment management are considered;
8. the implementation of a cost effective system of oversight in relation to sewage management facilities in the Council area.

### **3.0 GOALS**

The goals of this strategy are to ensure that, by its implementation:

- ❑ the impacts of on-site sewage management facilities on the environment will be minimised;
- ❑ the location of all on-site sewage management facilities will be identified;
- ❑ a partnership will be developed between Council, householders and service agents to support continuing improvement of on-site sewage management;
- ❑ the owners of on-site sewage management facilities will be made aware of the type of systems installed on their premises at the time of inspection and of the limitations which may be placed on the operation of those systems;
- ❑ the owners of on-site sewage management facilities will be made aware of the need for ongoing maintenance and that they can be provided with the necessary information and support to ensure that their systems are maintained so that they meet the performance standards set out in the Regulation;
- ❑ a cost effective system of general performance assurance and supervision of on-site sewage management facilities is implemented;
- ❑ Council may recover all or part costs of implementation of this strategy by charging fees for the issuing of approvals in respect of facilities installed in high, medium and low risk locations;
- ❑ links will be created between this strategy, Council's Delivery Program and Operations Plan, State of the Environment Report and relevant planning instruments to facilitate the achievement of the objectives of this strategy and to ensure Council takes into account the issues related to on-site sewage management in its strategic planning process.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

### **4.1 Legislation and Guidelines**

On 9 March 1998 the Minister for Local Government announced new regulatory reforms and guidelines to enable more effective Council regulation and performance supervision of household septic tanks and other small on-site sewage management facilities.

The regulatory changes are included in the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, which sets the legal framework through which the controls are to operate. The guidelines are entitled "Environmental Health & Protection Guidelines: On-site Sewage Management for Single Households"

### **4.2 Reasons for Legislation**

The implementation of the reforms and the release of the guidelines were a response to a range of issues including:

- surveys in many areas had indicated that septic tanks and other on-site sewage management facilities were failing to meet environmental and health protection standards in all parts of NSW;
- the outbreak of hepatitis A linked to the consumption of oysters from Wallis Lakes was an indicator of the serious health risks involved;
- effluent from septic tanks posing risks in the Murray Darling Basin especially in settlement areas, areas discharging to slow flowing or discontinuous waterways and in areas, which rely on groundwater sources for water supply.

## **5.9 LOCATION AND CIRCUMSTANCES**

### **5.1 Location**

Narromine Shire Council has an area of 5224km<sup>2</sup> located in central NSW and has a population of 6850.

### **5.2 Climate**

Smith & Cooper (1996) provide the rainfall details for Trangie, dating from 1887 to 1996. These figures indicate that the region receives an annual mean rainfall of 480.9 millimetres (mm). Further to this, Smith & Cooper (1996) suggests that within the region the annual mean number of rain days is 79.9.

It should be noted however that Hoynes Wheeler & Co (1991) suggest that the annual rainfall in Narromine is higher than that of Trangie, due to more summer and spring rains. Unfortunately the data used by



Hoynes Wheeler & Co (1991) relates only to the period between 1965 and 1974.

Whilst there may be some variation between Narromine and Trangie rainfall, it is interesting to note, that Smith & Cooper's (1996) data indicates that during the early 1970's above average rainfall was experienced at Trangie. Therefore, as the Trangie data is averaged over 109 years of collection and not 9 years, the Narromine figures detailed by Hoynes Wheeler & Co (1991) may not be truly indicative of the regional annual rainfall. Hoynes Wheeler & Co (1991) do however suggest that rainfall in the region averages between 479 mm and 653 mm.

Smith & Cooper (1996) state that the mean evaporation at Trangie between the years 1968 and 1996 is 1940.6 mm. Further to this, at no time through the year does the monthly mean rainfall exceed the monthly mean evaporation. Smith & Cooper (1996) state that the lowest monthly evaporation mean of 52.5 mm is experienced in June. The monthly rainfall mean for June remains less than this, at 37.8 mm. Hoynes Wheeler & Co (1991) suggest that the average evaporation rates for the region are between 1890 mm and 1971 mm.

Smith & Cooper (1996) indicate that summers in the region are relatively hot, with an average monthly maximum temperature (between 1948 -1996) from December to February of 32.3°C, with a maximum peak through the day of approximately 43°C. The mean minimum temperature for the months of June to August is 3.9°C.

Mean relative humidity levels taken between 1948 and 1996, suggest higher levels are experienced in the region during the winter of between 76% and 83%. During summer, humidity drops to a mean between 48% and 50%. (Smith & Cooper, 1996)

### **5.3 Number of System Estimates**

It is estimated that 650 to 900 systems are located within the shire.

### **5.4 Potential Problem Areas**

#### **5.4.1**

- Small rural properties on the fringe of the Narromine and Trangie townships;
- Tomingley Village;
- Properties along the Macquarie River and other tributaries, creeks and water ways;
- Land Zoned RU4, RU5, and R5; and

- Systems located in areas of groundwater vulnerability as identified in Council's LEP mapping.

5.4.2 Council has not at this stage identified any other particular problem areas associated with on-site sewage management. The following situations however are identified as potential areas where problems may be identified:

1. Village areas where no reticulated sewage system is available;
2. Areas along the Macquarie River, creeks and tributary systems; and
3. Areas where significant numbers of small area subdivision have occurred or are likely to occur. This is particularly relevant to the creation of new rural residential zonings as a result of the Narromine Rural Residential Land Use Strategy and planning proposals currently being prepared and those going through the gateway process.

## **5.5 Linkages Between this Strategy and Council's Strategic Planning Process**

5.5.1 The evaluation section of this strategy sets out the evaluation and reporting processes which would be used to ensure that this strategy is linked with Council's strategic planning and reporting processes, and updated on a regular basis.

5.5.2 Council's current land use and development controls are set out in the Narromine Local Environmental Plan 2011 and the Narromine Comprehensive Development Control Plan 2011. These controls can also be overridden or modified by any relevant Regional Environmental Planning Policies (REPP's) and State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP's). Development Control Plans which may impact on issues related to on-site sewage management, are:

- Implementing buffer zones around sewage treatment systems;
- Control of development on flood prone lands in Narromine Shire; and
- Control of rural subdivision.

## 6.0 PROGRAMS

### 6.1 Requirements

Clause 47 of the Regulation provides temporary exemption for a period of three (3) months for a person who purchases (or otherwise acquires) land on which any sewage management facilities are installed. This applies after the date on which the land is transferred or otherwise conveyed.

Clause 48(e) of the Regulation provides exemption from the need for an approval in the following instances:

- (i) under the authority of a licence in force under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997, or
- (ii) in a vessel used for navigation, or
- (iii) in a motor vehicle that is registered within the meaning of the Road Transport Act 2013 and is used primarily for road transport.

This also applies to the same instances to operate systems under Clause 48(f) of the Regulation.

### 6.2 Implementation Processes

The Implementation of the requirements will involve Council in the following:

- Requiring the lodgement of applications for approval in respect of all on-site sewage management systems in the Council area;
- Establishing a data base of all installations in the Council's area. A register is currently in place however, may only capture 50-60% of the total number of systems installed in the Shire;
- Carrying out a desktop audit of those applications received;
- Inspect a range of installations of different types and in different locations throughout the Council area. The initial target number of inspections will be 5% of all applications received;
- Ultimately all installations located in identified high and medium risk areas will be inspected;
- Use the information obtained from the above data to identify high, medium and low risk installations. These risks would be related to performance, design or location criteria;
- Requiring the owners of sewage management facilities to obtain approvals to operate. Such approvals may require the provision of statements to Council concerning:
  - the achievement of certain performance standards;

- proof of regular maintenance being provided to Council;  
or
  - any other relevant issue;
- Requiring the upgrading of installations only where it is seen that those systems are incapable of meeting the performance standards set out in the regulation;
  - The levying of fees in respect of applications for approvals to operate, only after the implementation of this strategy. Such fees are to be set annually in conjunction with Council's annual budget and would be advertised as required prior to formal adoption. Application fees will be no higher than that recommended by the Office of Local Government.

## **7.0 APPLICATIONS AND APPROVALS**

### **7.1 Applications**

All installations will continue to require approvals to operate. This means that owners will need to submit applications for approvals prior to the expiry of current approvals. Installations classified as low risk will be issued with approvals to operate which last for five years, subject to compliance with specified criteria and will not be subject to inspection. Those installations classified as medium risk will be issued with approvals to operate, which last for three years, subject to compliance with the specified criteria and will be subject to inspection. Those installations classified as high risk installations will be issued with approvals to operate which last for two years and will be subject to inspection. Information outlining the method of risk assessment and the associated inspection regime are set out in clauses 10 and 8 respectively.

### **7.2 Fees**

Council has an obligation to its constituents to finance the various services it provides to the community. Unfortunately, this extends to the wide range of regulatory services Council is responsible for under State legislation and includes managing the regulation of on-site sewage management systems.

Council will therefore need to consider how it funds the regulation of the systems installed and operating in the Narromine local government area. In this regard, the following fee structure is proposed.

Application for approval to operate an on-site sewage management system -: **No charge**

Assessment of applications to operate and categorise on-site sewage management systems -: **No charge**

Where inspections are required (first or additional), the following fee is proposed -: **\$150 per inspection (inc GST)**

Any proposed fees will be set during the preparation of Council's annual estimates. Any fees proposed will be included in the required public participation process prior to adoption of Council's Delivery Program, annual Operational Plan plus rates and charges.

### **7.3 Performance Standards**

Before approving any application to operate a system of sewage management, Council must be satisfied that the system when operating will achieve the following performance standards:

- the prevention of the spread of disease by micro-organisms,
- the prevention of the spread of foul odours;
- the prevention of contamination of water;
- the prevention of degradation of soil and vegetation;
- the discouragement of insects and vermin;
- ensuring that persons do not come into contact with untreated sewage or effluent (whether treated or not) in their ordinary activities on the premises concerned;
- the minimisation of any adverse impacts on the amenity of the premises and surrounding lands;
- if appropriate, provision for the re-use of resources (including nutrients, organic matter and water).

When considering any application for an approval to operate a system of sewage management, Council will take into account those issues raised in the publication, Environment & Health Protection Guidelines: On-site Sewage Management for Single Households and AS1547-2000.

### **7.4 Failure to Meet Performance Standard**

It should be noted that where an installation, which is classified as low or medium risk, fails to operate in accordance with the performance standards of its approval, such installation would automatically be categorised as a high risk installation. This re-categorisation will not apply where the installation is maintained and repaired so that it again meets the performance standards within a period of twenty one (21) days of such failure.

## **8.0 INSPECTIONS**

### **8.1 General**

To support the implementation of this strategy, Council will implement an inspection regime to ensure that the objectives and goals of this strategy are achieved.

### **8.2 Initial Risk Assessment**

When applications, for approval to operate on-site sewage management systems are received by Council, the initial risk assessment of those applications will be completed by way of a desk top assessment. An assessment will be made of the category of risk which will be allocated to each installation. This assessment will be made in accordance with the criteria set out in clause 10. Such assessment will utilise the information provided in the application and any other information which may be held in Council's property records and topographic maps.

The initial approvals to operate will only be issued after completion of that assessment and if Council is of the opinion that the performance standards set out in clause 7.3 can be achieved.

### **8.3 Site Inspections**

To verify the general accuracy of those assessments a target group of 5% of those applications will be confirmed by site inspection.

### **8.4 Exemptions**

Clause 48(e) of the Regulation provides exemption under certain circumstances. Refer to Cl 6.1 in this strategy.

### **8.5 Renewal Inspections**

Applications for renewal of approvals to operate will be determined on the basis of random inspections of a minimum of 5% of applications received. Generally those random inspections will be weighted towards:

- installations in areas where previous inspections have indicated a history of system failure or operational problems; and
- on those types of systems, which previous inspections have indicated are prone to failure or operational problems.

## **8.6 Inspection and Reporting**

Issues raised in Clauses 11.1, 11.2, 11.3 and 11.4 will be reported in Council's Annual State of the Environment Report.

## **9.0 EXEMPTIONS**

### **9.1 Provision for Exemptions**

Clause 47 of the Regulation provides temporary exemption for a period of three (3) months for a person who purchases (or otherwise acquires) land on which any sewage management facilities are installed. This applies after the date on which the land is transferred or otherwise conveyed.

Clause 48(e) of the Regulation provides exemption from the need for an approval in the following instances:

- (i) under the authority of a licence in force under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997, or
- (ii) in a vessel used for navigation, or
- (iii) in a motor vehicle that is registered within the meaning of the Road Transport Act 2013 and is used primarily for road transport.

This also applies to the same instances to operate systems under Clause 48(f) of the Regulation.

On-site sewage management systems will be categorised into high, medium and low risk installations. Although all systems will be required to register, low risk systems may never have to be inspected unless a request is lodged with Council to do so.

### **9.2 Education**

Council will implement a public education program and an inspection regime for systems of sewage management within the Council area. The education will be achieved by media publicity, direct mailing of information to owners and by addressing meetings of affected community groups where it is considered necessary.

### **9.3 Proposed Exemptions**

It is Council's intention that installations, which are determined by Council as being in the low risk category, will not be required to be inspected unless a request is lodged with Council to do so. This exemption from inspection will continue to apply whilst the installation is

being maintained and operated in such a way that it achieves the performance objectives and standards set out in this strategy.

## **10.0 CATEGORIES OF RISK OF INSTALLATIONS**

### **10.1 Categories of Risk**

To allow implementation of this strategy all installations within the Shire will be categorised according to the degree of risk of each installation. In this regard three categories of risk will be implemented ie; low, medium and high. This system will rank the installations in terms of their likely impact on the particular issues set out in the objectives of this strategy. The allocation of premises or installations to risk categories will depend upon an assessment, by Council staff, of the combined effects of all relevant issues related to an installation.

### **10.2 Indicative Risk Criteria**

Set out below are the indicative criteria, which will be used by Council staff when making a risk assessment of installations. With particular installations, there may be other issues which may also be taken into account as part of the risk assessment process.

### **10.3 Low Risk Indicative Criteria**

Low risk indicative criteria for an installation include the following matters. That the system is:

- operating in accordance with:
  - \* the performance objectives of this strategy;
  - \* any requirements of the manufacturer of any of the system's components,
  - \* any conditions of accreditation imposed by the Director General of the Department of Health in respect of plans and designs for the sewage management facility;
  - \* any conditions imposed by Council on any approval to install a system of sewage management.  
(In this respect it should be noted that Council is the authority for making the necessary determinations regarding the above issues.)
- located on a property with a total land area of at least 2 hectares
- located so that any part of the system is at least 10 metres from any property boundary;
- located so that any part of the system is 100 metres or more from any permanent surface waters;
- located where the soil in which the drainage field is located is not highly permeable allowing free flow of effluent which may



contaminate ground water, impact on neighbouring properties or impact on the environment.

- ❑ located so that any part of the system is at least 40 metres from any other waters (eg farm dams, intermittent water ways and drainage channels);
- ❑ not located in an area with a known high water table (less than 20 metres);
- ❑ not located within an area prone to flooding in a 1 in 100 year flood;
- ❑ a type of sewage management system which serves no more than 11 people; and
- ❑ not located within 1.5km of a public water supply bore.

NB. It should be noted that failure to comply with the performance criteria or any conditions of either the Department of Health or Council means that the classification of a system is immediately changed to high risk. This means that an approval to operate is then required.

#### **10.4 Medium Risk Indicative Criteria**

Medium risk indicative criteria for an installation include the following matters. That the installation is:

- ❑ operating in accordance with:
  - \* the performance objectives of this strategy;
  - \* any requirements of the manufacturer of any of the system's components;
  - \* any conditions of accreditation imposed by the Director General of the Department of Health in respect of plans and designs for the sewage management facility;
  - \* any conditions imposed by Council on any approval to install a system of sewage management.

(In this respect it should be noted that Council is the authority for making the necessary determinations regarding the above issues.)
- ❑ located on a property with a total land area less than 2 hectares.
- ❑ located so that any part of the system is between 3 m and 10m from any property boundary;
- ❑ located so that any part of the system is between 50 metres and 100 metres from any permanent surface waters;
- ❑ located where the soil in which the drainage field is located is not highly permeable allowing free flow of effluent which may contaminate ground water, impact on neighbouring properties or impact on the environment.
- ❑ connected to a reticulated public water supply;

- ❑ located in an area with a known high water table (less than 15 metres);
- ❑ located within an area prone to flooding in a 1 in 20 year flood;
- ❑ a type of sewage management system which relies on mechanical or power driven parts to ensure its continued operation (eg AWTS, systems with collection wells whether with automatic pumps to on-site disposal areas, or pump out installations by tanker).
- ❑ Not located within 1.0km to 1.5km of public water supply bore;
- ❑ a type of sewage management system, which serves from 12 to 20 people.

NB. It should be noted that failure to comply with the performance criteria or any conditions of either the Department of Health or Council means that the classification of a system is immediately changed to high risk. This means that an approval to operate is then required.

### **10.5 High Risk Indicative Criteria**

High risk indicative criteria for an installation include the following matters. That the installation is:

- ❑ not or, in the last three years has not operated in accordance with:
  - \* the performance objectives of this strategy;
  - \* any requirements of the manufacturer of any of the system's components;
  - \* any conditions of accreditation imposed by the Director General of the Department of Health in respect of plans and designs for the sewage management facility;
  - \* any conditions imposed by Council on any approval to install a system of sewage management.

(In this respect it should be noted that Council is the authority for making the necessary determinations regarding the above issues.)
- ❑ located on a property with a total land area of less than 2 hectares;
- ❑ located on a property, which is located within zone R1, R5 or RU4 or is located within 100m of dwellings located on adjoining land;
- ❑ located so that any part of the system is less than 3 metres from any property boundary;
- ❑ located so that any part of the system is less than 50 metres from any permanent surface waters;
- ❑ located where the property has a boundary adjoining the Macquarie River, permanent creek or surface water;
- ❑ located where the soil in which the drainage field is located is highly permeable allowing free flow of effluent which may contaminate

ground water, impact on neighbouring properties or impact on the environment.

- ❑ located so that any part of the system is less than 25 metres from any other waters (eg farm dams, intermittent water ways and drainage channels);
- ❑ located in an area with a known high water table (less than 1 metre)
- ❑ a type of sewage management system which serves more than 20 people;
- ❑ within 1km of town or public water supply bore
- ❑ in order to protect town water supply, only AWTS's shall be installed within zone R1 where town sewer is not available.

## **11.0 REVIEW OF AND CHANGES TO CATEGORIES OF RISK**

All systems categorised in accordance with this strategy will receive a bi-annual compliance statement (BCS). The owner is required to sign the BCS indicating that their on-site sewage management system is operating in accordance with the performance standards. Failure to return the BCS may result in Council recategorising the system to high risk.

### **11.1 Review of Categorisation**

When an installation has been assessed and allocated to a category of risk by a member of Council's staff, any owner who believes that such allocation is not appropriate may apply to Council to have the risk assessment reviewed. Such a review may or may not involve the carrying out of a site inspection of the installation and may involve the payment of a fee to Council. The level of a fee, if any, for a risk assessment review will be determined annually by Council in conjunction with the fixing of its annual fees and charges.

## **12.0 RECORDS AND APPLICATIONS FOR RENEWAL**

### **12.1 Records**

Council will ensure that all applications received are recorded in a register and that details of the determination of those applications are also entered in the register. Such register will include full details: of,

- the applicant;
- the property concerned;
- the type of installation;
- the date of application;
- any site inspections;

- the determination of the application;
- the date of issue of any approval or refusal and any other relevant details.

This register may be kept in electronic format.

## **12.2 Notice of Renewal**

Notification is to be sent, to each owner of land, in respect of which an approval to operate is issued, at least two months prior to the expiry date of their current approval. Such notification is to incorporate an application form for renewal and full details of the information required to be submitted with the new application. The appropriate renewal fee in accordance with Council's current schedule of fees and charges must accompany each renewal application.

## **13.0 EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS STRATEGY**

### **13.1 Monitoring**

The ongoing efficiency of this strategy will be evaluated by a monitoring program. This program will involve:

- the random inspection of sewage management facilities throughout the Council area. The program of inspections will commence in the first Operational Plan following adoption of this strategy by Council; and
- an assessment of the integration of this strategy with other Council strategic planning processes. These processes may include but are not limited to the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, development planning, stormwater management planning and catchment management planning; and
- water and sewerage infrastructure planning; and
- an assessment of the effectiveness of this strategy in relation to the objectives and goals set out in clauses 2.0 and 3.0 and in relation to the resources required to implement the strategy.

On an annual basis Council may inspect 5% of all installations to determine whether they meet the performance standards set out in the Regulation. Where the inspections indicate that there is a general achievement of the performance standards then the random inspection rate may be decreased. If, on the other hand, the inspections reveal that a large number of installations are not meeting the performance standards then the rate of inspections will be increased.

The actual rate of inspections in any one year will be determined by Council's Director, Planning & Environmental Services after the annual State of the Environment Report has been considered. The % rate of inspection of installations may be varied according to the category of risk of installation (i.e. high, medium or low risk) and the particular risks attached to a particular category or type of installation as evidenced by Council's on-going inspection program.

### **13.2 Reporting**

Council's annual State of the Environment Report will include details of:

- the results of the on-site sewage management inspection program;
- details regarding particular patterns of system failure related to either location criteria or system type;
- an assessment of the ongoing integration of this strategy with the other strategic planning processes of Council;
- the effectiveness of this strategy and its implementation measured against the objectives and goals set out in Clauses 2.0 and 3.0.

### **14.0 REVIEW OF THIS STRATEGY**

This strategy is to be the subject of ongoing review. In the early stages of implementation it is intended that the content of the strategy will be reviewed by Council's Director, Planning & Environmental Services on an annual basis with any proposed changes to be publicly notified prior to formal consideration by Council. Ultimately, it is expected that the review process will stabilise and that reviews will occur every four years in the twelve month period after each general Council election.

In undertaking each review Council will take into account the information provided in Council's State of the Environment Reports and the results of any consultations with relevant Government Departments, the community generally and any local interest groups.

## REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

During the preparation of this document the following documents have been used or are acknowledged:

Draft Water Quality Standards. Issued by the Environment Protection Authority.

Environment & Health Protection Guidelines: On-site Sewage Management for Single Households issued by Department of Local Government, Environment Protection Authority, NSW Health, NSW Dept of Land and Water Conservation and the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning.

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Application form to operate an on-site sewage management system; and
2. Site assessment form for on-site sewage management systems.

Version Number	Created by	First Adopted	Resolution No.	Last Modified	Review Period
1	Director Planning & Environmental Services	12 November 2014	2014/383		2 Years