

# Domestic Wastewater Management Action Plan

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## Purpose

The Domestic Wastewater Management Action Plan 2021 – 2026 (DWMAP 2021 – 2026) sets out the strategies and associated actions the City of Casey will implement to improve the management of domestic onsite wastewater systems (systems that discharge less than 5000 litres per day) within the municipality, and thereby improve environmental health outcomes as well as minimising risks to public health.

The Domestic Wastewater Management Action Plan 2021 – 2026 meets the requirements of section 29(1) of the State Environmental Protection Policy (SEPP) Waters requiring the development of a domestic wastewater management plan.

## Strategies

The City of Casey has identified the following strategies for the management of onsite wastewater within the municipality:

1. *Implement a risk-based compliance monitoring program for onsite wastewater systems commencing in areas identified as giving rise to a higher likelihood of risk.*

A risk-based compliance monitoring program for onsite wastewater systems is necessary for the effective regulation of onsite wastewater systems.

2. *Implement an environmental water quality monitoring program commencing in areas identified as giving rise to a higher likelihood of risk.*

Environmental water quality monitoring can provide invaluable data regarding the functioning of onsite wastewater systems in a location, as well as data regarding the impacts of wastewater on the local environment. This data can then be used to prioritise compliance monitoring

activities as well as assist in the planning of the provision of sewerage infrastructure by the local water authority.

3. *Continue to engage with South East Water in relation to their planning of sewerage services within unsewered areas of the municipality.*

In some instances, the provision of and connection to a sewerage system maybe the only viable long-term solution to address negative environmental impacts associated with onsite wastewater systems. As a regulatory authority, it is Council's role to identify high risk areas and advocate for the installation of sewerage systems in these areas.

4. *Enhance relationships with key stakeholders including but not limited to EPA, Melbourne Water, South East Water and local environmental groups from an engagement and information sharing perspective in relation to onsite wastewater issues.*

The ability to share information in relation to local domestic onsite wastewater issues amongst key stakeholders should lead to the development of a more comprehensive understanding of local onsite wastewater issues. This in turn will enable the ongoing refinement of Council's domestic wastewater management plan.

5. *Continue to educate onsite wastewater system owners/operators on the management of onsite wastewater systems.*

Owners/operators of onsite wastewater systems need to have a basic level of knowledge in relation to how their system operates in addition to maintenance requirements in order to minimise the risks associated with onsite wastewater systems and comply with their general environmental duty requirement under the forthcoming amendments to the *Environment Protection Act*.

## Action Plan

Action	Lead Agency/Partners	Target Due Date	Monitoring & Performance Indicators
<i>Strategy 1: Implement a risk-based compliance monitoring program for onsite wastewater systems commencing in areas identified as giving rise to a higher likelihood of risk.</i>			
1.1. All areas/suburbs identified as posing a higher likelihood of risk to be audited by 2026.	Environmental Health	January 2026	100% of high-risk areas/suburbs audited by January 2026.
1.2 Ensure that all Council managed onsite wastewater systems are operated and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the new Environment Protection Act and associated Regulations.	Building and Facilities Team	Ongoing	Systems serviced in accordance with maintenance schedules and associated records maintained.
1.3 Annually review property data to ensure any properties that have connected to sewer are archived on Council's onsite wastewater database.	Environmental Health	Annually	Review to be completed by 31 December each year, with identified records archived by 31 January of the following year.

Action	Lead Agency/Partners	Target Due Date	Monitoring & Performance Indicators
<i>Strategy 2: Implement an environmental water quality monitoring program commencing in areas identified as giving rise to a higher likelihood of risk.</i>			
2.1 Implement environmental water quality monitoring in identified high risk areas and share data with local water authorities.	Public Health (Lead) OPLEs (Partner)	In progress	Environmental water quality monitoring implemented in all identified high-risk areas within 2 years of the adoption date of this action plan.  Water sampling results emailed to South East Water and Melbourne Water within 7 working days of receipt.
<i>Strategy 3: Continue to engage with South East Water in relation to their planning of sewerage services within unsewered areas of the municipality.</i>			
3.1. Advocate for the prioritization of sewer connection in identified high risk areas.	Public Health	Ongoing	Identified high risk sites notified to South East Water and all supporting documentation provided within 7 working days of collation of supporting documentation.
3.2 In areas where sewer connection is available, work with stakeholders including property owners and South East Water to ensure properties are connected to sewer where available.	Environmental Health (Lead) South East Water (Partner)	Ongoing	80% of all properties that have a sewer connection point located at their property boundary, connected to the mains system by 2026.
<i>Strategy 4: Enhance relationships with key stakeholders including but not limited to EPA, Melbourne Water, South East Water and local environmental groups from an engagement and information sharing perspective in relation to onsite wastewater issues.</i>			
4.1 Maintain a contact list of primary contact person/s for key stakeholder groups.	Public Health	Annually	Contact list is reviewed as part of the annual review of the Action Plan.
4.2 Share the outcomes of the annual action plan review with key stakeholders.	Public Health	Annually	Key stakeholders informed of the outcomes of the annual review within 5 working days of its completion.

Action	Lead Agency/Partners	Target Due Date	Monitoring & Performance Indicators
4.3 Involve key stakeholders in the review of the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan.	Public Health (Lead) Internal teams (Environmental Health, Planning, Drainage Environment & Sustainability) South East Water Melbourne Water EPA	Every 5 years	Outcomes of the review and a copy of the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan are sent to key stakeholders for comment and feedback at the commencement of the review period.
<i>Strategy 5: Continue to educate onsite wastewater system owners/operators on the management of onsite wastewater systems.</i>			
5.1 Evaluate the effectiveness of the current community education strategy.	Public Health (Lead) Digital & Data (Partner) Communications (Partner)	December 2021	Evaluation completed by 31 December 2021.
5.2 Redevelop the community education strategy to shift focus to more proactive communication initiatives.	Public Health (Lead) Communications (Partner) Community Engagement (Partner)	December 2021	Redevelopment completed by 31 December 2021.
5.3 Investigate the use of electronic software solutions to facilitate onsite wastewater system maintenance reporting to Council.	Public Health (Lead) Environmental Health (Partner) IT (Partner)	December 2021	Completion of feasibility investigation by December 2021.
5.4 Review Council permit templates to enhance readability.	Public Health (Lead) Environmental Health (Partner)	July 2021	Review and updates completed by 31 July 2021
5.5 Investigate the feasibility of obtaining property sale information from the Rates Department on a monthly basis and send out onsite wastewater system maintenance information to new property owners identified as not being connected to sewer.	Public Health (Lead) Rates (Partner)	January 2022	Completion of feasibility investigation by January 2022.

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