

Response to comments on draft Domestic Wastewater Management Plan



Purpose

The questions and comments received from members of the public in response to the exhibition of the Draft Domestic Wastewater Management Plan on Casey Conversations have been grouped into key themes. Comments and answers to these questions have been provided in the table below.

Question/Issue	Response
Draft domestic wastewater management plan does not contain any actions.	Stakeholder feedback obtained from the consultation process has been used to shape the draft action plan. A copy of this plan can be found in the documents section on the Casey Conversations page.
Who is responsible for the provision of sewer infrastructure?	To provide clarity, sewer planning and the construction and installation of infrastructure is a role of water authorities.
What are the impacts of the DWMP on owners of existing systems?	<p>The purpose of the DWMP is to articulate (1) the current state of knowledge in relation to onsite wastewater systems within the municipality and (2) the steps that Council is proposing to implement to improve Council's management of onsite wastewater systems within the municipality.</p> <p>As a system owner, over the life of the Plan you will receive more communication from Council about your system than you have in the past. This may range from receiving information via post to a request to enter your property to inspect your system.</p> <p>The Plan does not change your existing obligations. For example, the requirement to maintain your system in good working order.</p>
Issues with the Victorian Planning Provisions – subdivisions and rezoning	Issues relating to rezoning and the subdivision of land is a planning matter and therefore outside the scope of the DWMP.
Issues with existing systems e.g. seepage	<p>If you are experiencing a problem with your own wastewater system, then you should contact a licensed plumber and arrange for them to assess your system.</p> <p>If you have concerns about a system that is not your own e.g. on a neighbouring property, then please</p>

	contact Customer Service on 9705 5200 to lodge a report for investigation by Council's Environmental Health team.
Inaccuracy of Council's onsite wastewater system permit database.	<p>Under the current Environment Protection Act (Environment Protection Act 1970), a permit to install/alter a system exists in perpetuity.</p> <p>If a property subsequently connects to mains sewer, then Council should be notified so that the relevant file on the permit database can be updated and then archived. If notification is not received, then the file remains on the database.</p>
Monitoring of local waterways – what actions are Council proposing to take?	<p>Collecting water samples from local waterways in order to ascertain, what, if any impact onsite wastewater systems may be having on the waterways is in its infancy.</p> <p>If the DWMP is adopted, then one of the proposed actions is to expand collection of samples to other waterways throughout the municipality. This will be done in a prioritised fashion based on the perceived likelihood of risk to local waterways.</p> <p>It is important to note that the priority risk rating will evolve over time as further data is gathered.</p>
Use of digital solutions to enhance receipt of maintenance reports e.g. via an app.	The use of digital solutions to facilitate the receipt of system maintenance reports from property owners/service agents will be explored as part of the larger goal of improving the education of stakeholders.
Stormwater drainage infrastructure concerns.	<p>Concerns relating to stormwater drainage infrastructure are outside the scope of the DWMP.</p> <p>If you have concerns relating to Council stormwater drainage infrastructure, please contact Customer Service on 9705 5200 to discuss your concerns.</p>

Contact City of Casey

03 9705 5200

TIS: 131 450

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Who is responsible for the maintenance of onsite systems?	<p>The owner of the property on which an onsite wastewater system is located is responsible for the maintenance of their system and for paying any associated costs. This includes any repair or system upgrade costs.</p> <p>The department of Families, Fairness and Housing and other agencies offer a variety of concessions and benefits to eligible cardholders to assist low-income Victorians during financial hardship. If you have a relevant concession card, you may be eligible for one of these concessions.</p> <p>Services: https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/hardship</p>
How would the compliance monitoring system work in practice?	<p>The proposed approach to compliance monitoring is for Council to undertake system audits on a suburb by suburb basis. This will be done in a prioritised fashion based on the perceived likelihood of risk.</p> <p>It is important to note that the priority risk rating will evolve over time as further data is gathered.</p>
If the DWMP is adopted, as an owner of an onsite wastewater system, will I be charged a fee?	<p>Under the Environment Protection Act 1970, local governments can only charge a fee in relation to an application for a permit e.g. to install or alter a system.</p> <p>This is remains unchanged.</p>
Are there any subsidies for property owners to upgrade an existing system e.g. like the Victorian Government's solar panel rebate scheme?	<p>Unfortunately, there are no subsidies for property owners to upgrade an existing system in operation currently in Victoria.</p> <p>Council does not provide financial assistance to property owners to connect to sewer.</p>

Next Steps

The draft Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP), has been amended to reflect feedback received from both community members as well as from other regulatory bodies.

The objectives have been amended based on the feedback received. From this, the action items that will need to be undertaken to achieve each objective have been formalised and can be viewed in the document titled Draft Domestic Wastewater Management Plan – Action Plan’.

The entire document including the action plan will now proceed through internal approval processes with the aim of being presented to Council for endorsement early in the new financial year.

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