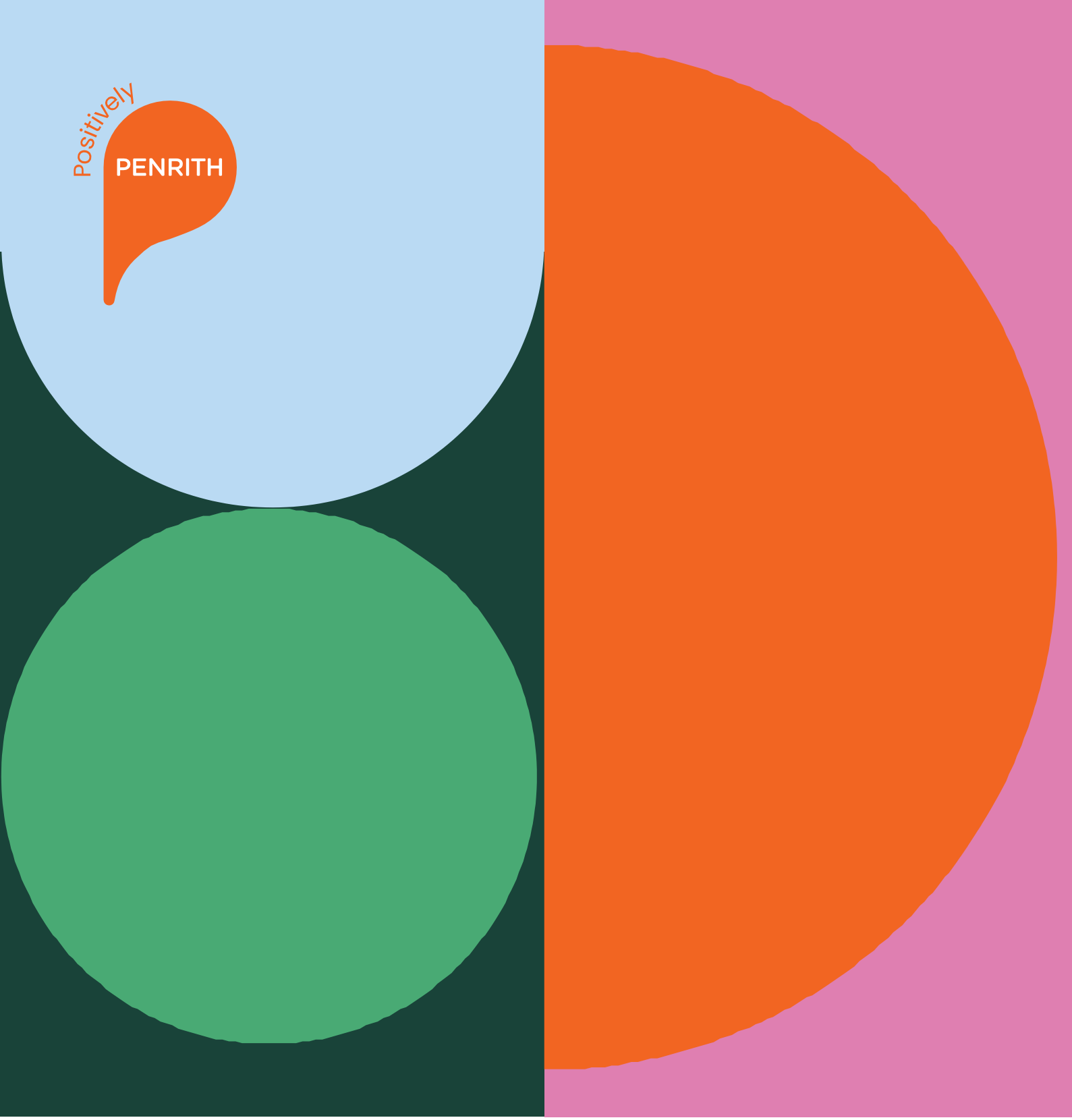


On-Site Wastewater Management Policy

Environmental Health & Compliance

November 2025

PENRITH CITY COUNCIL

Version control

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Draft v1	November 2025	Revision of Policy	Kirk Ryan – *Senior Environmental Health Officer* Tara Arduin – *Environmental Health Officer*
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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Penrith City Council is committed to implementing a program that regulates the operation of On-site Wastewater Management (OWM) systems to ensure best practice and to protect environmental and public health.

There are approximately 4500 OWM systems across the Penrith Local Government Area (LGA), which covers approximately 404km^2 and includes sewered urban areas, sewered and unsewered rural villages and rural areas.

This Policy has been developed to assess, regulate and manage the selection, design, installation, operation and maintenance of domestic and commercial OWM systems. The document provides information to assist with the installation application process. It also responds to the provisions of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* that requires system owners to obtain approval for the installation and operation of OWM systems under Section 68 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

This Policy has been prepared with consideration of the:

- *Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines,* Office of Local Government, 2025
- *Australian Standard (AS/NZS 1547:2012) On-Site Domestic Wastewater Management*
- *Greywater Reuse in Sewered, Single Household Residential Premises,* NSW Health, 2000
- *Designing and Installing On-Site Wastewater Management Systems,* WaterNSW, 2023

1.2. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- Existing and proposed domestic OWM systems,
- Existing and proposed commercial OWM systems,
- Greywater reuse,
- Unsewered properties within the Penrith LGA.

1.3. Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Guide all relevant stakeholders towards sustainable on-site management of wastewater,
- Protect and enhance the quality of public health and the environment within the LGA,
- Assist Council in the efficient regulation and monitoring of on-site wastewater management systems within the LGA.

1.4. Policy Structure

The structure of the Policy is outlined below:

Installing an OWM system Council approval is required to install or modify an OWM system	See Section 2.1
Operating an OWM system A property owner requires an 'Approval to Operate' for all OWM systems Operational Approval ⬇ Renewal of 'Approval to Operate'	See Section 2.2
Regulation of Program	See Section 2.3
Reusing Greywater	See Part 3
Connecting to Mains Sewer	See Part 4

2. Installation & Operation of On-Site Wastewater Management Systems

2.1. Installation Approvals

The installation or modification of an OWM system requires approval from Council under Section 68 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

The site assessment guidelines in Table 1 are used to assess applications. They are based on the following best practice guidelines:

- *Australian Standard 1547:2012 On-site domestic wastewater management*
- *Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines, Office of Local Government, 2025*

Council will consider the following during site assessments for development applications and installation approvals:

- Impacts on the catchment,
- Impacts on public health and the environment,
- Suitability of the site,
- Requirements and suitability of proposed and/or existing systems.

The main systems operating in the LGA are Aerated Wastewater Treatment Systems (AWTS) and septic tanks. Appendix E discusses some alternative wastewater options that may be considered by Council.

Once an OWM system has been installed, an 'Approval to Operate' is required to be obtained from Council to operate the system (refer to Section 2.2).

Table 1 - Site Assessment Guidelines

Assessment Criteria		Low Limitation	Medium Limitation	High Limitation
Flood potential		Above 1 in 100 year flood contour	Above 1 in 20 year flood contour	Below 1 in 20 year flood contour
Exposure to sun & wind		Good	Can be improved	Poor
Slope %	Surface irrigation	0-6	6-12	>12
	Sub-surface irrigation	0-10	10-20	>20
	Absorption system	0-10	10-20	>20
Landform		Hill crests, convex side slopes & plains	Concave side slopes & foot slopes	Drainage plains & incised channels
Run-on & up-slope seepage		None	Signs of minor seepage	High - diversion not practical
Erosion potential		No erosion	Potential erosion	Signs of erosion
Site drainage		No signs of surface dampness	Signs of surface dampness	Signs of saturation
Rocks & rock outcrops (% of land surface containing rocks > 200mm diameter)		<10%	10-20%	>20%
Environmentally sensitive areas		None	As defined in *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*	As defined in *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*
Fill		No presence of fill		Presence of fill
Buffer distances (see Table 3)		Adequate		Inadequate
Land area for effluent Management (see Table 2)		Available		Not available
Stormwater diversion		Good	Moderate	Poor
Condition of tanks		Good	Minor work required	Major work required
Condition of management areas & irrigation lines		Good	Minor work required	Major work required
Condition of pump-out lines		Good	Minor work required	Major work required

2.1.1.Installation of OWM Systems

The information required to be submitted with an installation application for an OWM system is shown in Appendix A.

A Wastewater Assessment Report prepared by a suitably qualified consultant (as defined in Section 4.1.1 of the *Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines, Office of Local Government, 2025)* is required to be submitted with an application for the installation of a new domestic OWM system when:

a) the system is proposed within an area that has high limitations (see Table 1), or

b) the proposed system is not accredited by NSW Health, or

c) for an AWTS, the Effluent Management Area (EMA) sizing referred to in Table 2 cannot be met, or

d) the EMA consists of more than one area, or

e) the buffers distances referred to in Table 3 cannot be met, or

f) a dual occupancy or secondary dwelling is proposed and the OWM system for either dwelling cannot meet the requirements of Table 2 or Table 3, or

g) the proposed system is located within flood affected land (see section 2.1.7), or

h) a subdivision application is being considered, or

i) a subsoil disposal or absorption system is proposed, or

j) the proposed dwelling has more than 6 bedrooms, noting that Council may consider rooms which can be used for habitable purposes as bedrooms (for example, study rooms, theatres etc.).

A Wastewater Assessment Report is required with an application for all commercial systems.

Appendix B outlines the minimum requirements for a Wastewater Assessment Report. Section 4 of the O*nsite Wastewater Management Guidelines* and *AS/NZS 1547:2012* should also be used as a guide when preparing a Wastewater Assessment Report.

Table 2 - Sizing of Domestic Aerated Wastewater Treatment Systems' Effluent Management Areas (EMA)

Sizing of AWTS EMA			
Suburb	**No. of Bedrooms**	**Surface and Sub-Surface Irrigation Areas (m^2)**	
		Reticulated Water	Tank Water
Sandy Soil Types ***Agnes Banks - east of Castlereagh Road. Castlereagh - north of Devlin Road and east of Castlereagh Road.***	**2**	584	467
	3	779	623
	4	973	778
	5	1168	934
	6	1326	1090
Clay Soil Types ***Most other areas***	**2**	417	334
	3	556	444
	4	695	556
	5	833	667
	6	972	778

Notes:

(1) The irrigation areas in Table 2 are calculated using conservative figures to enable sustainable management of effluent. An applicant can provide a Wastewater Assessment Report to support a proposal for a smaller EMA.

(2) The EMA is based on nutrient balances as they are considered to be the most limiting factors in these areas.

(3) Figures in Table 2 are based on:

- *a. 150 litres per person/day or 120 litres per person/day for tank water supply*
- *b. One person per bedroom and two for a master bedroom*
- *c. TN output value of 25 mg/L and a Critical Loading Rate of 27 mg/m^2/day*
- *d. TP output value of 12 mg/L*
- *e. P sorption capacity - 600,000 mg/m^2/depth for clay soil types or 400,000 mg/m^2/depth for sandy soil types*
- *f. Design Irrigation rate of 15 mm/week for clay soil types or 35 mm/week for sandy soil types.*

(4) A Wastewater Assessment Report is required for applications with more than 6 bedrooms.

(5) Council assesses effluent loading based on two persons for a master bedroom, two persons for a guest room and one person per additional bedroom. A study, media, theatre, or any other room that has the potential to be used as a bedroom, may be considered as an additional bedroom.

(6) Council assesses effluent loading of all secondary dwellings on the assumption that the first bedroom is considered a master bedroom (2 Equivalent Persons).

Table 3 – Buffer Distances for OWM Systems

System	Buffer Distances
All parts of the OWM (tank and EMA)	• 250 metres to domestic groundwater well • 100 metres to permanent surface waters (e.g. rivers, creeks, streams, lakes etc.) • 40 metres to other waters (e.g. dams, stormwater easements, overland flow paths, intermittent waterways and drainage areas etc.) • 15 metres from an in-ground water tank • 1 metre from the drip line of native trees and shrubs
Tank	• Minimum 1.5 metres from dwelling, property boundaries & ancillary structures • Minimum 6 metres from swimming pools
Surface spray irrigation	• 15 metres to dwellings • 6 metres if area up-slope and 3 metres if area down-slope of buildings, driveways and property boundaries • 3 metres to paths and walkways • 6 metres to swimming pools and recreational areas • 40 metres to any market garden
Surface drip and trickle irrigation	• 6 metres if area up-slope and 3 metres if area down-slope of dwellings, swimming pools, property boundaries, driveways and buildings • 20 metres if area up-slope and 10 metres if area down-slope of any market garden.
Subsurface irrigation	• 6 metres if area up-slope and 3 metres if area down-slope of dwellings, swimming pools, property boundaries, driveways and buildings • 20 metres if area up-slope and 10 metres if area down-slope of any market garden.
Absorption system	• 12 metres if area up-slope and 6 metres if area down-slope of property boundaries and dwellings • 6 metres if area up-slope and 3 metres if area down-slope of swimming pools, driveways and buildings • 20 metres if area up-slope and 10 metres if area down-slope of any market garden.

Notes:

(1) Additional buffer distances may be required as identified during Council's assessment of the development proposal.

(2) EMAs on market gardens sites are required to be fenced.

(3) In the event that buffer distances to domestic groundwater wells, surface and other waters cannot be achieved, a Wastewater Assessment Report is required to provide viral die-off modelling in accordance with the methodology referenced in Section 6.7 of the Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines.

2.1.2. Additional Requirements for Aerated Wastewater Treatment Systems (AWTS)

The following requirements need to be considered in conjunction with Section 2.1.1 for all AWTS:

- All EMAs are to be suitably designed and located based on site characteristics and environmental constraints. Appendix C shows an example of an EMA layout for a domestic system.
- The EMA for the system is to be calculated using the hydraulic and nutrient loading rates, and the resulting EMA size will depend on the most limiting factor. Both calculation methods should be included in the Wastewater Assessment Report. The larger of the two areas must be provided as the minimum EMA.
- AWTS must be inspected and serviced by an experienced service agent in accordance with the NSW Health accreditation. This service must also be carried out according to the manufacturer's instructions. The system owner is responsible for organising service inspections, and the resulting service report must be provided to Council **electronically**. Refer to Appendix D for further information regarding AWTS service requirements.

***Note**: For the purposes of this Policy, the provisions for AWTS throughout this document also apply to Biological Filter Systems and Wet Composting Systems (that include an irrigation system) when it can be demonstrated that the quality of the treated effluent is equivalent to that produced by an AWTS.*

2.1.3. Additional Requirements for Absorption Beds, Trenches & Mounds

The following requirements need to be considered in conjunction with Section 2.1.1 for all absorption bed, absorption trench and mound systems:

- The design requirements of the *AS/NZS 1547:2012 On-Site Domestic Wastewater Management* and the *Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines*, and those considerations stated elsewhere in this Policy are to be followed.
- As per *AS/NZS 1547:2012*, a reserve area that is 100% of the design EMA shall be made available on a site for the resting of the management area, or for the duplication or upgrade of the EMA if it is required at some future time. The reserve area shall be protected from any development that would prevent it being used in the future. Reserve EMAs must be shown on plans submitted to Council when seeking installation approval.

2.1.4. Additional Requirements for Pump-out Systems

New pump-out systems are not supported unless in exceptional circumstances.

The following requirements need to be considered in conjunction with Section 2.1.1 for all pump-out systems:

- Effluent must be pumped out at least once a week (unless otherwise approved by Council).
- A suitable service provider is to be engaged to pump out the tank/s and dispose of the waste at a licensed waste facility.
- Owners of pump-out systems (except those systems covered by Council's domestic service) must provide pump-out records to Council as per the conditions of their 'Approval to Operate' or on request (including volumes, service provider details, system details and the disposal location).

2.1.5. Commercial Systems

Commercial systems regulated by Council are generally sized between 10EP and 2500EP (EP - equivalent persons). Systems receiving commercial or industrial type wastewater may also be classified as a commercial OWM system, regardless of the wastewater loading.

Commercial systems require both installation and operational approvals from Council. Any application for a commercial OWM system must be supported by a Wastewater Assessment Report completed by a suitably qualified wastewater consultant. Applicants must ensure that the proposal is consistent with the requirements outlined in the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's *Liquid Trade Waste Management Guidelines 2021*. All applicants are recommended to seek pre-lodgment advice from Council prior to the submission of an installation or modification application.

2.1.6. Dual Occupancies & Secondary Dwellings

Each dwelling within a dual occupancy arrangement is to be serviced by its own OWM system.

If a dual occupancy or secondary dwelling is proposed, the OWM system must comply with the requirements of Table 2 and Table 3 for each dwelling, or a Wastewater Assessment Report is to be provided. The Wastewater Assessment Report is to identify all existing and proposed OWM infrastructure, including EMAs and reserve EMAs, on the property.

Secondary dwellings may be serviced by an existing OWM system only where it can be

demonstrated to the satisfaction of Council through a Wastewater Assessment Report, that the system and the site have the capacity to manage effluent effectively. It must be demonstrated that the site has sufficient land available for the replacement and/or alteration of the existing system in the future.

2.1.7. Flood Liable Land

OWM systems, including the tank/s and EMA, are to be installed outside areas of the property affected by mainstream flooding or local overland flow paths in the 1% AEP (1:100) flood event. The buffer distances of Table 3 also need to be addressed. If an alternative location for the OWM system cannot be found on the property, a Wastewater Assessment Report is required to be submitted with the application.

The Wastewater Assessment Report must assess and consider the effects of the flooding on the proposed system's tank/s and EMA and provide mitigation measures to minimise the impacts of flooding. Any proposal for the OWM system should consider the provisions of Section 3.5 Flood Planning in Council's Development Control Plan 2014. Development which relies on OWM in a 5% AEP (1:20) flood contour will not be supported.

Generally, Council will not support development obstructing overland flow paths. In particular, mound systems are not supported when constructed in an area identified as an overland flow path. Any mounding (including for OWM systems, stormwater diversion and raised garden beds) in areas affected by mainstream flooding are to address the filling of land below the flood planning level in accordance with Section 3.5 Flood Planning in Council's Development Control Plan 2014.
The electrical and mechanical components of the OWM system shall be located above the 1% AEP (1:100) flood contour. Where possible, tank/s should be located on flood free land.

If an existing system is to be replaced and/or altered on a property that is flood liable, all measures must be taken to protect the system and its components from being affected by flooding.

2.1.8. Subdivision & Rezoning Proposals

The following needs to be considered in relation to subdivision and rezoning proposals:

- A Wastewater Assessment Report will be required at the subdivision or rezoning planning stage. Potential OWM systems and available EMAs will need to be identified.

- Where a proposed subdivision includes an existing dwelling, the assessment shall demonstrate that the subdivision will not impact on the dwelling's ability to comply with this Policy.

- Subdivision proposals that rely on pump-out systems will not be supported. Subdivisions in unsewered areas must be designed to achieve the sustainable management and disposal of wastewater and to prevent impacts on human health and the environment.

- Subdivision proposals in unsewered areas that rely on an OWM system must provide minimum lot sizes in accordance with Council's Planning and Development Controls.

2.1.9. Decommissioning OWM Systems

OWM systems contain untreated wastewater and, if they are abandoned and/or incorrectly decommissioned, they may enable contaminants to enter into the soil and groundwater. Pathogens and nitrates from wastewater can have serious health and environmental impacts, including potentially contaminating the soil and groundwater and polluting local watercourses. Wastewater tanks that have not been correctly decommissioned may also pose a safety hazard on properties.

If a wastewater tank is to be decommissioned, the property owner is required to notify Council in writing, including the proposed date of decommissioning and the reason why the tank is being decommissioned. Decommissioning must then be carried out adhering to NSW Health's *Advisory Note 3 – Revised January 2017: Destruction, Removal or Reuse Of Septic Tanks, Collection Wells, Aerated Wastewater Treatment Systems (AWTS) and other Sewage Management Facility (SMF).*

2.2. Operational Approvals

Section 68 of the Local Government Act 1993 states that Council approval is required to operate a system of sewage management.

Existing OWM systems that are found to be functioning in a manner that meets the applicable performance standards and conditions of operation will be given a risk classification by Council. Council Officers reserve the right to amend the risk classification of an OWM system where site conditions or operating standards change.

The risk classification categories are:

- **Low** - requiring renewal of 'Approval to Operate' every 5 years

- **Medium** - requiring renewal of 'Approval to Operate' every 3 years

- **High** - requiring renewal of 'Approval to Operate' every 1 year

All commercial systems are initially classified as high risk. Inspection fees may be applicable in accordance with Council's adopted Fees and Charges.

Note: *Site limitations used to assess the risk classification of a system are outlined in Table 1 of this Policy.*

The following outlines Council's procedures for issuing an 'Approval to Operate':

- New systems will be inspected and risk classified upon installation. Based on this inspection, a 1, 3 or 5 year 'Approval to Operate' will be issued in accordance with the above risk classifications.
- All existing OWM operational approvals are required to be renewed prior to their expiry. Existing systems will be classified in accordance with the risk categories prior to the renewal of the 'Approval to Operate'. Until existing systems are risk-rated, they will continue to be issued a 3-year 'Approval to Operate'.
- An 'Approval to Operate' may be renewed where there are known compliance issues, however, all compliance issues will be followed up to ensure they are resolved to the satisfaction of Council.

2.2.1. 'Approval to Operate' for new OWM systems

Prior to issuing an 'Approval to Operate' for a new system, Council Officers will conduct a number of inspections, including:

- Tank/s installation;
- Drainage lines between the tank and EMA;
- EMA;
- Final Inspection once all works are completed and the system is commissioned.

Final inspections are a pre-requisite prior to the issue of the 'Approval to Operate'. The 'Approval to Operate' will not be issued without a satisfactory final inspection.

Note: *Council requires a minimum of 72 hours' notice to arrange a final inspection. Prior to backfilling, please contact Council's Environmental Health Team to arrange all inspections.*

2.3. Inspection & Monitoring

The *Local Government Act 1993* gives Council the tools to regulate OWM systems, including the authority to inspect and monitor these systems. Regulation of OWM systems will include the following:

- Systems will be inspected based on their risk classification.
- System inspections may be carried out to investigate complaints.

- System owners and operators are required to comply with the conditions of their Installation and Operational Approvals.
- Re-inspections of failing systems will be required until the system meets the current health and environmental performance standards. Re-inspections are subject to fees in accordance with Council's adopted Fees and Charges. *Local Government Act 1993* Orders and penalty notices can be issued to ensure compliance with the conditions of approval, and to ensure wastewater is managed appropriately. Orders and penalty notices can also be issued if a system is found to be operating without an 'Approval to Operate' or installed or modified without approval.
- Penalty notices and Notices can also be issued for pollution offences under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*.
- Orders and penalty notices may also be issued under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 where applicable.

3. Installation & Operation of On-Site Wastewater Management Systems

3.1. Reusing Greywater

Greywater can be diverted to your garden through a Greywater Diversion Device or a Greywater Treatment System in line with this Policy.

Greywater typically includes wastewater from showers, baths, hand basins, laundry tubs and washing machines. Wastewater from the kitchen, dishwashers and spas contains too much fat or is too acidic or alkaline for use with Greywater Diversion Devices. Wastewater from the toilet is too high in bacteria to reuse and is commonly referred to as blackwater.

3.2. Greywater Diversion Devices

Greywater Diversion Devices redirect untreated greywater to the garden for reuse by sub-surface irrigation. Greywater Diversion Devices in sewered areas that comply with the following requirements do not require approval from Council.

- The dwelling must not be connected to an OWM system.
- All Greywater Diversion Devices must have a WaterMark licence - accreditation from SAI Global.
- The dwelling must not form a part of a townhouse, villa or multi-unit development.
- Greywater is to be applied to the garden by sub-surface irrigation. This will reduce human exposure to the water. Sub-surface is defined as artificial watering of land through buried watering systems. Watering systems are to be no less than 100mm below ground surface.
- Greywater is to be used only during prolonged warm/dry periods, and volumes should be limited to those needed to meet plant water requirements.
- Ensure that the diversion system is 'fail-safe', that is greywater will automatically be diverted to the sewer if the greywater system blocks or otherwise malfunctions.
- Divert greywater to sewer during periods of wet weather.
- Do not divert kitchen wastewater, which has a high concentration of contaminants not readily broken down by soil organisms.
- Only divert the lowest risk greywater such as the shower, bath, hand basin and laundry rinse water.

- Never divert greywater that could have gross faecal contamination, for example water used to launder soiled nappies.
- Always wash your hands after gardening. Do not irrigate vegetable gardens supplying food crops that are eaten raw or undercooked as this could pose an unacceptable health risk.
- Never store untreated greywater for more than 24 hours, as concentrations of contaminants may reach dangerous levels.
- Do not allow greywater to pool or stagnate, as this will attract insects and rodents, which may transmit disease.
- Never allow greywater to discharge beyond property boundaries, as this may create environmental and public health risks.
- Never allow greywater to discharge to a drain or waterway, as it is likely to be harmful to aquatic life and is considered water pollution.
- Never drink greywater or allow pets or other animals to drink or have access to it.
- Do not allow the soil to become saturated. Carefully monitor the impact of greywater on the irrigation area in order to minimise the risk of a pollution incident.
- The installation of a Greywater Diversion Device is to comply with the Plumbing Code of Australia.
- The device is to be installed by a licensed plumber.
- The device is to comply with NSW state guidelines including guidelines and fact sheets produced by NSW Health, NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCEEW) and WaterNSW. For single, detached households (no more than one dwelling), the NSW *Guidelines for Greywater Reuse in Sewered, Single Household Residential Premises apply*.

3.3. Domestic Greywater Treatment Systems

Greywater Treatment Systems are designed to collect, treat and reuse greywater. These systems treat the wastewater to a quality that enables it to be used above ground (spray irrigation). Domestic Greywater Treatment Systems must be accredited by NSW Health and require both installation and operational approval from Council.

It is important to note that although these systems are designed to achieve a level of water quality that is suitable for irrigation, the treated greywater is still not permitted to be reused for activities such as handheld hosing or washing motor vehicles. The reuse of greywater for flushing toilets and laundry uses is only permitted if the system is accredited for that use.

The requirements for installing a Greywater Treatment System are similar to that of an

AWTS. When applying for an installation approval, the information marked in Appendix A will need to be provided with the application form.

3.4. Regulations for Greywater Reuse

The Local Government Act 1993 regulates installation and operational approvals for Domestic Greywater Treatment Systems and Greywater Diversion Devices. As with all wastewater management systems, it is the operator's responsibility to ensure the system is installed and operating correctly.

There are penalties for failing to operate these systems in an environmentally satisfactory manner. If required, Council will use provisions of the following legislation to ensure these systems do not impact on human health or the environment:

- Notices and Orders under the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- Notices under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*.
- Penalty notices under the above legislation.

4. Connecting to Mains Sewer (Sydney Water)

Mains sewer systems are provided in residential areas to ensure safe collection, treatment and disposal of domestic, commercial and industrial wastewater. Properties located within an area that is serviced by mains sewer are generally required to be connected to the sewer and to dispose of their wastewater through that system.

Existing Sewered Areas
OWM systems will not be permitted when mains sewer is available and connection is possible.

Newly Sewered Areas
Properties within a newly sewered area will be required to connect to mains sewer within 12 months of the date of commissioning. Properties failing to connect may be directed to connect in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993. Once connected, any existing OWM system is required to be decommissioned or alternatively converted to a Greywater Treatment System or Stormwater Tank in accordance with the relevant guidelines as issued by NSW Health. Council is required to be notified in writing once the system has been appropriately decommissioned or converted to a Greywater Treatment System or Stormwater Tank.

For both existing and newly sewered areas, proposed Greywater Treatment Systems and Greywater Diversion Devices will need to comply with Section 3 of this policy.

Conversion of an OWM System in a Newly Sewered Area
It may be possible to convert an OWM system to a stormwater vessel for the purpose of collecting and reusing stormwater for irrigation. However, conversions may not be appropriate on all sites. Contact Council for further information regarding the relevant requirements and guidelines.

5. Fees & Charges

The *Local Government Act 1993* allows fees and charges to be levied for:

- Applications to install or construct a sewage management system
- Applications to alter a sewage management system
- Applications to operate a sewage management system
- Inspections and re-inspections of sewage management systems

Council has adopted fees and charges for the On-Site Wastewater Management Program in its adopted 'Fees and Charges'. The Fees and Charges have been established to recover the costs of resourcing the program, in the areas of administration, monitoring and inspecting systems. Further information on where fees/charges are applicable is provided in Table 4.

Table 4 – Fees/Charges

	Installation	Issue of Approval to Operate	Operational Inspection	Inspection for non-compliance
AWTS	✓	✓	**N/A**	✓
Pump Out	✓	✓	**N/A**	✓
Other Domestic Systems	✓	✓	**N/A**	✓
Commercial / Non- Domestic Systems	✓	✓	✓	✓
Greywater Treatment System	✓	✓	**N/A**	✓
New Property Owners (where system already installed on property)	**N/A**	✓	**N/A**	✓

6. Policy Review & Evaluation

Council is committed to the continual improvement of on-site wastewater management within the LGA in accordance with best practice. This Policy will be reviewed to ensure that human and environmental health remain at the forefront of on-site wastewater management.

Appendices

Appendix A – Information to be provided with an Application to Install an OWM System

Table A1 - Information to be provided with an Application to Install

	Domestic AWTS	Pump Out	Other Domestic OWM Systems	Commercial	Greywater Treatment System
System design specifications	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NSW Accreditation Certificate (where applicable)	✓	✓	✓	**N/A**	✓
Effluent quality data	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	✓[1]	**N/A**
Monitoring and maintenance schedule (for non-NSW Health accredited systems)	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	✓	**N/A**
Wastewater Assessment Report (also refer to Appendix B)	✓ Only if minimum requirements cannot be met	✓	✓	✓	✓
Site Plan (including proposed irrigation area dimensions and methods [2], see Appendix C for an example)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dwelling / Building floor plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Effluent Management Area Drainage and Landscaping Details	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Statement of Environmental Effects [3]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Notes:

(1) Effluent quality data includes data which is derived from long term monitoring and analysis of the treated effluent from the same system to that proposed. At minimum, this is to include data on Biological Oxygen Demand (BODs), Faecal Coliform levels, Total Nitrogen, Total Phosphorus, pH levels, Suspended Solids and Free Chlorine levels. Council maintains the discretion to request further information if required.

(2) The Site Plan needs to include information regarding the irrigation methods to be used for wastewater disposal. This information is to include the location, dimensions and number of irrigation lines, distribution lines, irrigation zones, standpipes and sprinklers depending on the type of wastewater disposal proposed.

(3) A Statement of Environmental Effects is only required when the application to install an OWM system is submitted as part of an application for a new development. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required to be prepared for a Designated Development application.

Appendix B – Preparing a Wastewater Assessment Report

The procedures in section 5.2.2.3 of *Australian Standard (AS/NZS 1547:2012) On-Site Domestic Wastewater Management* are to be followed when preparing a Wastewater Assessment Report. In addition, the below requirements need to be considered.

Wastewater load

A wastewater load of 150 litres per person per day is to be used for households with a reticulated water supply. For households with only tank water supply, a wastewater load of 120 litres per person per day is to be applied.

For commercial systems, the wastewater flows in Table B1 need to be applied when calculating the sizing of on-site wastewater management systems.

Table B1 - Information to be provided with an Application to Install

Source	Typical wastewater flow allowance in L/person/day[1]	
	On-site roof water tank supply	Reticulated community or a bore-water supply
Motels/hotels		
▪ guests, resident staff	120	150
▪ non-resident staff	30	40
▪ reception rooms	20	30
▪ bar trade (per customer)	20	25
▪ restaurant (per diner)	20	30
Community halls		
▪ banqueting	20	35
▪ meetings	10	15
Restaurants (per diner)		
▪ dinner	20	30
▪ lunch	15	25
Tea Rooms (per customer)		
▪ without restroom facilities	10	15
▪ with restroom facilities	15	25
School (pupils plus staff)	30	40
Rural factories, shopping centres	30	50
Camping grounds		
▪ fully serviced	100	130
▪ recreation areas	50	65
Note: *These flows are minimum rates unless actual flows from past experience can be demonstrated.*		

Number of persons
Council assesses effluent loading based on two persons for a master bedroom, two persons for a guest room and one person per additional bedroom. A study, media, theatre or any other room that has the potential to be used as a bedroom may be considered as an additional bedroom. Council assesses effluent loading of all secondary dwellings on the assumption that the first bedroom is considered a master bedroom.

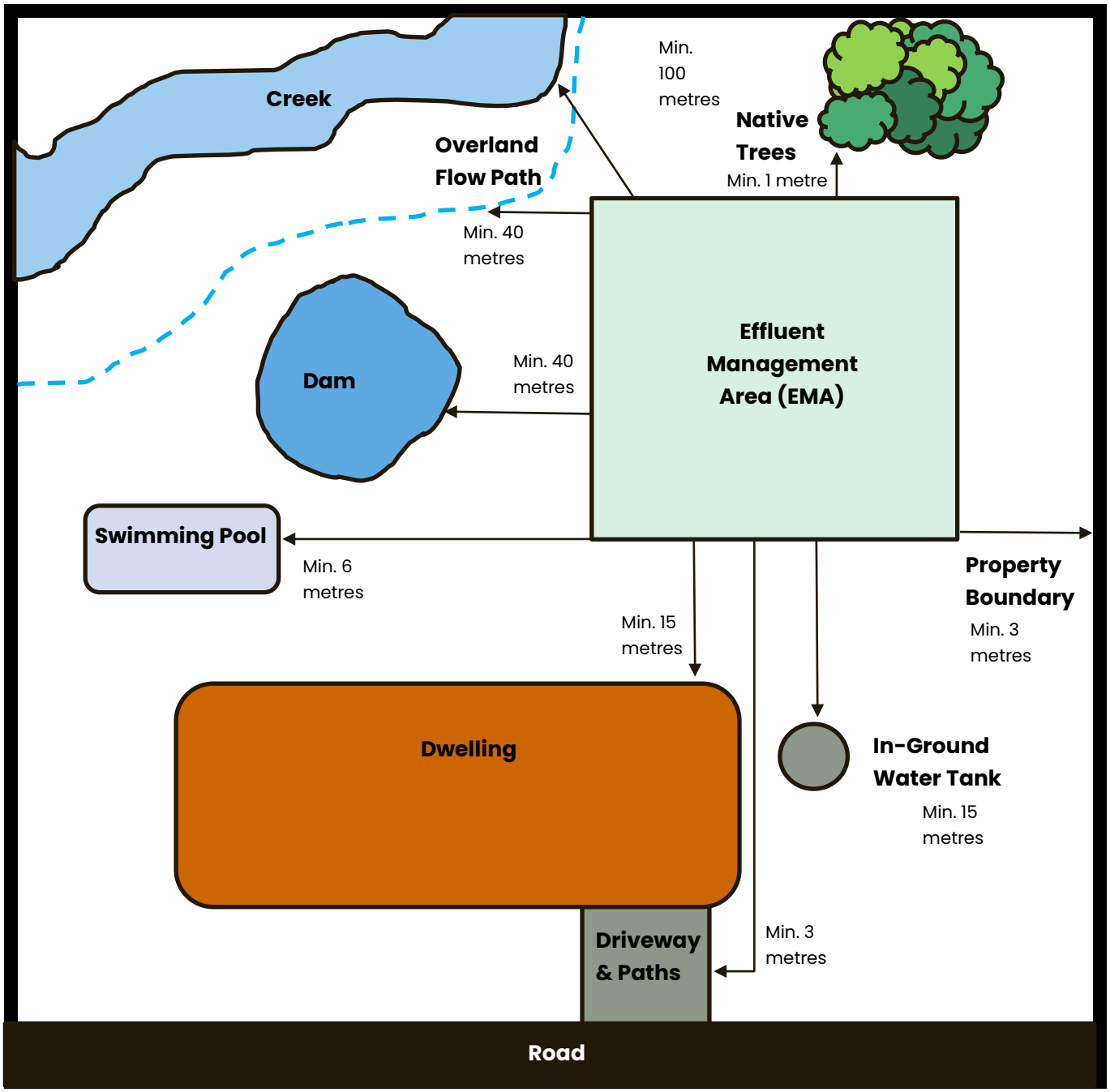
Nutrient uptake
When considering the appropriate critical loading rate for nutrient uptake, details of the vegetation to be used within the management area are to be provided along with any maintenance requirements for that vegetation. Where the disposal calculations include nutrient uptake by vegetation, the type of vegetation is to be such that it results in nutrient uptake all year round.
Appropriately sized and located Nutrient Uptake Areas (NUAs) may be suitable for some sites. See section 6.3.4 of the Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines for further information on NUAs.

Native vegetation
The potential impact of wastewater on native vegetation needs to be addressed. Special consideration must be given to land mapped within the NSW State Government's Biodiversity Values Map. Council may require the management area to be relocated or the applicant to carry out a Flora and Fauna Assessment to demonstrate that there is no significant impact.

Buffer distances
The Wastewater Assessment Report must give consideration to the buffer distances provided in Table 3 of this policy. The report must provide suitable justification for non-compliant buffer distances.

Effluent Management Area sizes and location
The Wastewater Assessment Report must provide suitable justification for the sizing and location of the proposed EMA. The site plan is to clearly identify the proposed EMA location on the site, the location of all other development (existing and proposed), slope of land, and show all relevant buffer distances.

Appendix C – Example Layout for an Effluent Management Area



The above diagram demonstrates an Effluent Management Area (EMA) layout on a **level site** for **spray irrigation** and is not drawn to scale. All plans submitted to Council are to be drawn to scale and be site specific.

Note: *Additional buffer distances may be required as identified during Council's assessment of the development proposal.*

Appendix D – Aerated Wastewater Treatment System Servicing & Reporting Requirements

It is the responsibility of an AWTS owner/operator to have their system serviced. AWTS must be inspected and serviced by an experienced service agent in accordance with the NSW Health accreditation. In accordance with NSW Health's *Advisory Note 5 – February 2018 Servicing of Single Domestic Secondary Treatment Sewage Management Facilities (SMF),* Council does not permit property owners or occupiers to undertake this servicing.

1.1 AWTS Service Agent Requirements

The following requirements apply to service agents:

- Each service agent shall provide a registered business office which, if unattended during business hours, is provided with a telephone answering device or service.
- A means of reporting a system malfunction or breakdown outside normal business hours shall be available.
- In the event of a breakdown or malfunction, the agent shall, within 24 hours of the breakdown or malfunction, ensure that repairs are carried out to the AWTS to ensure continued operation of the system. This may necessitate provision of adequate spare parts and temporary replacement blowers and irrigation pumps where repairs cannot be completed on site.

1.2 AWTS Servicing Requirements

The system operator shall enter into a service agreement with the manufacturer, distributor or other person accepted by Penrith City Council to service the AWTS every three (3) months from the date of commissioning (or for a period as required by the NSW Health accreditation).

The three-monthly service shall include a check on all mechanical, electrical and functioning parts of the aerated system including:

- the chlorinator
- replenishment of the disinfectant

- the UV disinfection unit (where applicable)
- all pumps and switches
- the air blower, fan or air venturi
- the alarm system
- the EMA and irrigation spray outlets and/or sub-surface irrigation lines and filters
- the slime growth on the filter media, and the operation of the sludge return system.

The following field tests are to be carried out at every service:

- free residual chlorine using DPD colorimetric or photometric method
- pH from a sample taken from the irrigation chamber
- dissolved oxygen from a sample taken from the final aeration or stilling chamber (recommended but optional).

On the anniversary date of the commissioning of the system, the service shall also include a check on the sludge accumulation in the AWTS.

For systems which use the sewage treatment principle of activated sludge or contact aeration, a sludge bulking test, known as a SV30 Test, shall also be conducted on an annual basis. This test is to determine whether the accumulated sludge is bulking, indicating that the aeration compartment(s) will require de-sludging.

1.3 AWTS Reporting Requirements

On completion of each service, a legible service report sheet is to specify:

- all service items and test result figures
- detailed description of any tests and observations undertaken on the effluent management area (including all distribution lines, sprinklers and associated plumbing)
- amount of chlorine compound provided OR specific actions taken for other forms of disinfection
- date and time the service was conducted, and

- technician's name and contact details.

A copy of the service report is to be:

- given to the system operator, and
- provided to Penrith City Council **electronically**, no later than 14 days from the service date. Service agents are required to submit **individual electronic PDF** service reports to Council. **Multiple service reports within a single document will not be accepted.**

If Council receives a service report that does not comply with the above requirements, the report may be returned to the system operator or service provider requesting further information or the carrying out of an inspection. **Processing fees may be charged to service agents for each system/property that does not comply with the above electronic/individual requirement.**

Appendix E – Alternative Wastewater Options

There are other types of on-site wastewater management systems in addition to those already covered in this Policy. Council will consider applications for these systems based on their merit. For further information about these systems, please see the NSW Health website and the WaterNSW document *Designing and Installing On-Site Wastewater Management Systems*. The requirements of Section 2.1.1 still need to be met for the installation of these systems.

Composting Toilets

Composting toilets can have either a dry or wet composting process. They rely on the principle of aerobic composting or bio degradation of organic matter. They work by providing an enclosed environment for the natural decomposition process which is aided by microorganisms (aerobic bacteria). If properly composted according to the accredited manufacturer's standards, the end product is a nutrient rich fertiliser that can be used on plants thereby reducing the need for commercial fertiliser while also saving water.

Sand Filter System

Sand filter systems generally use a sand bed with a gravel or geotextile base,

all protected by an impermeable liner, to filter wastewater. Wastewater from a treatment tank is piped to the filter system, and the wastewater then filters through the sand layer, after which it may be disinfected prior to being piped to a management area. Sand filter systems may also be recirculating, and be located above, partially above, or below the ground. The surface may be mounded to help divert rainwater from the surface of the system.

Mound

A mound system is a soil absorption system which is raised above the natural soil surface. Wastewater from the dwelling is sent to a holding tank (septic or AWTS), and the effluent is then pressure dosed to the mound. Mounds generally use a fill material such as a sand media. Mound systems can overcome many site restrictions including shallow permeable soils over a porous bedrock, permeable soils with a high-water table and slowly permeable soils.

Biological Filter Systems

A biological filter system involves the combination of two treatment techniques. The waste is first made to pass through filter beds and is then subjected to aerobic decomposition with the aid of biological microorganisms such as worms, beetles, mites and other soil fauna. The treated effluent is then disposed of by sub-surface irrigation or absorption trenches.

Appendix F – Definitions

Absorption - Uptake of liquid into soil.

Absorption Bed & Trench System – Sub-soil land application systems that rely on the capacity of the soil to accept and transmit the applied hydraulic load.

Aerated Wastewater Treatment System - A wastewater treatment system that uses several processes to treat the wastewater to a satisfactory quality that allows it to be *reused* for irrigation purposes. *For the purposes of this Policy, the provisions for AWTS throughout this document also apply to Biological Filter Systems and Wet Composting Systems (that include an irrigation system) when it can be demonstrated that the quality of the treated effluent is equivalent to that produced by an AWTS.*

Audit - An official inspection and examination.

Bedroom - A room that has the potential to be used for sleeping, including a study, theatre or media room.

Catchment - The area from which a stream, river, lake or other body of water receives its water.

Commercial System - An on-site wastewater management system that is larger than 10 Equivalent Persons or receiving wastewater from a commercial/industrial premises.

Contamination - The presence of undesirable impurities in a substance.

De-sludging - Withdrawing sludge, scum and liquid from a tank.

Domestic Greywater Treatment System - A system that collects, treats and disinfects greywater generated by a household, for one or more of the following end uses: toilet and urinal flushing, washing machine, and surface or sub-surface irrigation.

Domestic System – An on-site wastewater management system that is less than 10 Equivalent Persons.

Domestic Wastewater - Wastewater arising from household activities, including wastewater from bathrooms, kitchens, and laundries.

Drip Line - A line around a plant directly under its outermost branch tips. Roots seldom grow beyond the drip line.

Dual Occupancy - Two dwellings on one lot of land that are either attached or detached, but does not include a secondary dwelling.

Effluent - Any waste products (treated or untreated) from any process or human activity.

Effluent Management Area (EMA) - A suitably sized area which is designed to effectively manage the disposal of wastewater.

Environmentally Sensitive Area - Are rivers, riparian land, escarpments and other scenic areas, conservation area sub-catchments, national parks and nature reserves, wetlands, other significant flora and fauna habitats and corridors, and known and potential acid sulphate soils. (As identified in *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*)

Evaporation - When a liquid turns to vapour.

Existing OWM System - Means a system installed and operating prior to the adoption of this

policy.

Flood Liable Land - land susceptible to affectation by mainstream flooding or local overland flow paths.

Greywater - Domestic wastewater excluding toilet waste and may include wastewater arising from a hand basin, kitchen, bath, shower and laundry.

Greywater Diversion Device - A device that diverts greywater generated by a household for sub-surface irrigation reuse.

Groundwater - All underground waters.

Impermeable - Water is unable to move through the material.

In-ground Water Tank - a tank that has any part situated below the ground surface.

Intermittent Waterway - A waterway that is not permanent and may be influenced by rainfall.

Local Overland Flow - local runoff from sub-catchments rather than overbank discharge from a stream, creek, river, estuary, lake or dam.

Mains Sewer - Mains sewer is a centralised sewerage system. In Penrith City, mains sewer is operated by Sydney Water.

Mound System - A soil absorption system which is raised above the natural soil surface. Wastewater from the dwelling is sent to a holding tank (septic or AWTS), and the effluent is then pressure dosed to the mound.

Nutrients - A substance that is essential for plant or animal growth, such as nitrogen and phosphorous.

Permanent Surface Water - A body of water that is present at all times. Includes, but is not limited to, rivers, creeks, streams and lakes.

Permeability - The general term used to describe the rate of water through a substance.

Pump-out System - Systems that include a collection well that receives effluent from a septic tank that is frequently pumped out and removed from the property by a licensed contractor.

Secondary Dwelling - A self-contained dwelling that is established in conjunction with another dwelling (the principal dwelling) and is on the same lot of land. The total area of the secondary dwelling must not exceed the greater of 60 square metres or 10% of the total floor area of the principal dwelling.

Sub-surface Irrigation - Artificial watering of land through buried watering systems. Watering system is to be no less than 100mm below ground surface.

Surface Irrigation - Artificial watering of land through an above ground system.

Unsewered - Not connected to a reticulated sewerage system.

Wastewater - Water that carries wastes from residential, industrial or commercial premises. Water that has been contaminated by some activity. Includes greywater and sewage.

Wastewater Assessment Report - A detailed assessment prepared by a suitably qualified consultant that applies relevant standards and guidelines to determine the suitability of the proposed system and disposal method.