

Piopio Sewerage Network

Information about your properties' on-site wastewater system

Council provides a sewerage network for Piopio, to ensure the effective disposal of sewage in an environmentally sustainable manner and to protect public health.

Waitomo District Council's contractor, Innoflow Technologies installed the new onsite wastewater systems in Piopio and has been responsible for the management of the system since it became operational in June 2012.

This contract arrangement has expired and WDC is now responsible for the maintenance and operation of the onsite wastewater systems in Piopio.

WDC would like to support residents by providing the following information that will help you maximise the system's efficiency.

The systems are similar to a septic tank; the grey water (from the washing machine and kitchen sink etc) is diverted by means of a small pump. This ensures that the sewage can be treated effectively and that the collection capacity of the system is not reduced.

What this means is that all the necessary precautions that are generally observed for a private septic tank system, should be adhered to by all property owners with an onsite wastewater system.

The main breakdown (or digestion) of the sewage is completed in the onsite tank located on properties. Any harsh chemicals will negatively affect the performance of the biological agents. Solids, either floating or heavy, will fill up the tank too quickly and lead to blockages in the system.

INTRODUCING HARMFUL PRODUCTS TO THE SYSTEM

Introducing harmful products into the system may reduce the efficiency of the system or stop the treatment process by destroying the bacteria that exists within the system.

Some residents experience occasional issues such as slow draining toilets. These are usually caused by blockages as a result of fats, greases or large items, like clothing, nappies or even newspaper being introduced to the system via the sewer line between the house and the waste water system. Resolving these types of issues are the responsibility of the resident and a private plumber must be called in to investigate.

ALARMS GENERATED BY THE SYSTEM

There are two alarms that are generated on-site by the wastewater system. Both alarms are visual and audible, and have a "Silence Alarm" button that will stop the audible part of the alarm for a period of 12 hours.

- ▶ **Low level alarm.** This is indicated by an audible alarm and a flashing red light on the control panel. This is usually an alarm that has the potential to clear itself. When the "Silence Alarm" is activated, and the alarm clears itself during this time, the alarm will not be reactivated.

- If the low level alarm reactivates, it could be due to a more significant issue. Therefore an inspection is required to rectify the problem and WDC should be called as soon as possible.

- ▶ **High level alarm.** This is indicated by a static red light and audible alarm. It is very important that residents call WDC as soon as possible when this alarm is activated. The 'silence alarm' can be activated after the fault has been reported to WDC.

Other Issues

WDC will need to inspect your septic tank as soon as possible in the event that physical damage to the control box and tank parts (lids, pipes, etc.) takes place. If this occurs please phone 0800 932 4357.

In the event of a prolonged power failure, the septic tank can fill-up and the high level alarm will be generated. This alarm will clear as the pump controls the level inside the septic tank. Should the alarm not clear itself after a power failure, then residents should notify WDC of the incident for investigation.

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR SEPTIC TANK

As with any engineered system, your onsite sewerage system will work better and last longer if you learn what can go into it and what can not. It is important that every member of your household is aware of these precautions, along with any guests or visitors to your residence.

The new wastewater system is not designed to treat any fats, oils or greases.

DO NOT tip, flush or drain any of the following prohibited substances into your onsite wastewater system as it will block the tank and cause overflows.

- ▶ Pharmaceuticals
- ▶ Egg shells, gum, or any food waste/ scraps
- ▶ Condoms, sanitary items or anti-bacterial wipes
- ▶ Large volumes of bath or body oils
- ▶ Flammable or toxic products
- ▶ Household cleaners/ floor wax and carpet cleaner
- ▶ Chlorine, bleach, pool or spa products
- ▶ Pesticides, herbicides, agri-chemicals or fertilizers.
- ▶ Special additives to 'enhance the performance' on your system (the natural micro-organisms in your wastewater system take care of this for you).

As a general rule, the only substances that should be disposed of into your wastewater system are human waste, bath and dish water and mild detergent/ wash water.

If you have any concerns or queries regarding your onsite wastewater system, please contact us.