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C34**EFFLUENT DISPOSAL AND WATER QUALITY**

This policy applies to all development that is unable to be serviced with reticulated sewerage.

Policy Basis

The whole of Towong Shire is located within a Special Water Supply Catchment Area listed in Schedule 5 of the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994.

Development within the Shire that cannot be serviced by reticulated sewerage should be located and designed to account for the sites environmental attributes and any nearby environmental features, such as, waterways wetlands, bores and dams, particularly features providing water for stock, human or food production purposes. Any development that cannot be serviced by a reticulated sewerage system needs to be designed, sited and developed to prevent pollution of land and water resources.

This Policy seeks to implement the water quality protection objectives in Clause 14.02 of the SPPF. It also builds on the MSS objectives and strategies relating to the sustainable management of the Shire's natural resource base, in particular protection of water quality.

Objectives

- Ensure water quality and human and animal health is not affected by development.
- Ensure that effluent disposal systems are suitable to the soil type and topography of the site, and are appropriately located away from environmentally sensitive features.
- To ensure effluent is not discharged off site.
- To ensure that the density of effluent disposal systems is suitable to the soil type and topography of the site.
- To ensure alternative effluent disposal systems such as package treatment plants which treat the effluent to a higher standard than conventional septic systems are used preferentially within the Shire.
- Ensure that landscape and environmental values are considered, protected and enhanced.

Policy

It is policy to:

- Recognise the 'precautionary principle' when assessing the likelihood of environmental impact.
- Encourage the use of EPA approved package treatment plants.
- Avoid the disposal of domestic waste water in areas subject to inundation and flooding.
- Implement the environmental setbacks contained within the Environment Protection Authority's Code of Practice for On-Site Waste Water Management.
- Ensure each lot created by a subdivision is of sufficient size to manage waste water within the lot boundaries.
- Ensure development will not lead to the pollution of land and water resources.
- Ensure development is appropriate to the site and environmental characteristics of the allotment.

- Ensure development proposals clearly demonstrate that such use and development will not adversely affect the water quality in any waterway. This can be done by providing:
 - A land capability assessment report should be provided indicating that the design and location of the effluent disposal system is appropriate to the site and environmental characteristics of the land. The Land Capability Assessment must be undertaken in accordance with the methodology of Australian Standard AS/NZS1547:2012 and the Environment Protection Authority Publication No. 746.1 Land Capability Assessment for On Site Domestic Wastewater Management and must include:
 - Advice that the location and/or proposed density of effluent disposal systems within the area will not impact on environmental features.
 - Advice about system selection in response to the soil characteristics and site features.
 - A management program, which ensures ongoing environmental sustainability and protection of human health.
 - Scaled topographic plans detailing areas which can be irrigated without discharging waste water from the site.

Decision Guidelines

In considering applications the Responsible Authority will have regard to:

- The recommendations of any Land Capability Assessment.
- The location of environmental features or hazards including land that is subject to inundation and flood.
- The ability to adhere to the setbacks provided by Guidelines for Environmental Management: Code of Practice – Onsite Waste Water Management Publication 891.3 February 2013 (as amended).
- The risk to the environmental and public health.
- The ability to treat and retain all waste water within the lot boundaries.

Policy References

- Guidelines for Environmental Management: Code of Practice – Onsite Waste Water Management Publication 891.3 February 2013 (as amended).
- Guidelines for the Protection of Water Quality, North East Planning Referrals Committee, 2001 (as amended).
- Land Capability Assessment for Onsite Domestic Wastewater Management,
- Environment Protection Authority, Publication 746.1, March 2003 (as amended).
- State Environment Protection Policy (Waters of Victoria).
- North East Regional Catchment Strategy, North East Catchment Management Authority, May 2013 (as amended).
- Upper North East Water Quality Strategy – An Action Plan within the North East
- North East Waterway Strategy, North East Catchment Management Authority, 2014 (as amended).
- Towong Shire Domestic Wastewater Management Plan, July 2008 (as amended).

- Planning Permit Applications in Open, Potable Water Supply Catchment Areas, November 2012 (as amended).
- Australian/New Zealand Standard for On-site Domestic Wastewater Management (AS/NZS1547:2012) (as amended).