

Effluent Disposal

Effluent Disposal Systems/Drainage and Alteration Work

Many of our buildings still discharge stormwater to soakage trenches and particularly in the rural area effluent is disposed of on the property via a septic tank and effluent drainage field.

These ground based systems require regular inspection and maintenance to ensure they continue to operate effectively particularly septic tanks and effluent drainage fields.

Older septic tanks should be checked at least annually to ensure sludge is not building up and effluent drainage fields should be maintained to ensure effluent is contained on your property and does not pose a hazard to people or animals.

It is most important that as a property owner you have a back up drainage field that you can access quickly should your existing field become overloaded or ineffective because of changed conditions or failed maintenance.

When doing alteration work to an existing dwelling by adding additional bedrooms. Consideration must be given to the size and capacity of the existing effluent disposal system or septic tank.

Confirmation of the existing septic tank must be provided with your Building Consent application. This can be done by measuring the width/length and depth to give the cubic metre or litre capacity or checking Council records of as-built drainage plans on your property file. Further information of litre capacity in regard to numbers of bedrooms can be checked out with your drainlayer or in AS/NZS 1547:2000 On-Site Domestic Wastewater Management.

Building over existing drainage work maybe another consideration when doing alteration work. An as-built drainage plan should be available when a PIM is requested to enable location of drains. Professional advice should be obtained if building over existing drainage.

Planning requirements

Many areas require a resource consent for effluent drainage fields particularly when they are close to boundaries. Please check with Council planning staff if you are proposing to install or change on site effluent or stormwater disposal.

Checklist of the type of information required for your Building Consent Application

- Application form COMPLETED & signed**
- All information identified on the cover sheet**
- Certificate of Title:** Recent search copy less than 6 months old, plus a sale & purchase agreement if not in the applicant's name. A subdivision scheme plan is required for a new site where Title is not yet available.
- Copies of drawings as specified in the cover sheet**
- Site Plan**, showing buildings, ground and floor levels and dimensions.
- Project Information Memorandum** (if already issued)
- Specifications**
- Ground Conditions report**
- Engineers Details & Producer Statement**

The publication *Checklist for Lodging a Building Consent* outlines in detail the information required by Council to process a Building Consent Application.

Glossary of Terms

DBH - Department of Building and Housing

LIM - Land Information Memorandum

PIM - Project Information Memorandum

Useful step-by-step guides can be found at www.consumerbuild.org.nz which can help you to understand the processes required.

More User Guides in this series are

- Accessory Buildings
- Change of Use
- Demolition
- Effluent Disposal
- New Dwellings
- Relocating a Dwelling
- Transportable Buildings
- Wet Area Showers

Otherwise visit your friendly customer services officer at Nelson City Council or www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz