

EFFLUENT DISPOSAL (Information Sheet)

Effluent Disposal Systems/Drainage & Alteration Work

Many of our buildings still discharge stormwater to soakage trenches or soak holes 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.

When doing alteration work to an existing dwelling by adding additional habitable spaces and bedrooms, consideration must be given to the size and capacity of the existing effluent disposal system and septic tank. Upgrading may be required along with approval from Environment Canterbury (Ecan).

All new and upgraded effluent disposal systems are required to be a specific design by a suitably qualified consultant with full plans and specifications to be submitted with your building consent application.

Regional Council Approval – all new and upgraded systems require approval from Environmental Canterbury. Resource Consent may be required. It is advisable to obtain Ecan approval prior to submitting your plans to Council for building consent as your building consent may be delayed if Ecan approval has not been obtained.

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

All new and upgraded effluent disposal systems are required to be a specific design by a suitably qualified consultant with full plans and specifications to be submitted with your building consent application.

The publication *Customer Guide to the Building Consent Process* 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
- Ecan – Environment Canterbury
- NZBC – New Zealand Building Code
- LBP – Licensed Building Practitioner
- OSH – Occupational Safety and Health
- BRANZ – Building Research Association of New Zealand

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:

- Customer Guide to the Building Consent Process – IS-000
- Accessory Buildings – IS-103
- Demolition – IS-106
- New Dwelling / Residential Buildings – IS-108
- Transportable Buildings – IS-110
- Fire Code Requirements for SH Purpose Group – IS-112
- Building Code Clauses – IS-114
- Amusement Device – IS-116
- Fencing your Swimming Pool – IS-119
- Fees & Charges – IS-101
- Change of Use – IS-105
- Effluent Disposal – IS-107
- Relocating a Dwelling / Building – IS-109
- Domestic Smoke Alarm Systems for Dwellings – IS-111
- Wet Area Showers – IS-113
- Accessible Facilities – IS-115
- Extension of Time – IS-118
- Solid Fuel / Liquid Fuel Heating Appliance – IS-120

Otherwise visit your friendly Customer Services Officer at Timaru District Council.