

WHY IS COUNCIL CHANGING THE WAY IT SERVICES THESE SYSTEMS?

While Hunter Water Corporation is the water authority for our city, not all properties can connect to the sewer network. These properties essentially need to find an alternative way of managing wastewater.

Now that there are available contractors to provide this service, we are confident residents can obtain reliable services without Council needing to facilitate a contract. This will allow property owners to have greater control and flexibility over the frequency of their wastewater removal rather than committing to a fortnightly one-size-fits-all pump out service.

WHAT IS AN ONSITE SEWAGE FACILITY?

If your home is not able to connect to the sewer network, an onsite sewage facility is required to treat and dispose of the wastewater from your sinks, showers, baths and toilets.

WHAT DOES THE CHANGE TO THE SEWER PUMP OUT SERVICE MEAN?

We're working with property owners to find a new sewer pump out solution that works for them. From July 2024, homeowners will have direct contracts with local service providers to give them greater control and flexibility over their wastewater removal.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY SYSTEM WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE CHANGE?

You will receive a call, email or letter from us notifying you about the change.

HOW DO I FIND A NEW SERVICE PROVIDER?

A list of potential service providers has been included in our correspondence. You can also download the list of potential service providers from lakemac.com.au/pump-out-changes.

CAN I FIND OUT MY FINAL DATE FOR PUMP OUT BY COUNCIL'S CONTRACTOR?

Call us on 4921 0769 to find out your final scheduled pump out date.

WHEN I ENGAGE A SERVICE PROVIDER, WILL I BE REQUIRED TO HAVE THE WASTEWATER FROM MY TANKS PUMPED OUT FORTNIGHTLY?

The frequency of pump out can be arranged with your new service provider to match your water usage and individual circumstances.

WILL COUNCIL ASSIST ME IF I HAVE PROBLEMS WITH MY NEW SERVICE PROVIDER?

Yes, we can support you by providing historical data and information relating to your individual circumstances.

WILL MY RATES BE AMENDED ONCE I FIND A NEW SERVICE PROVIDER?

After 30 June 2024, the historic service will cease and the charge will be removed from your rates notice.

If your service with your new provider starts prior to 30 June 2024, please let us know so we can cancel your service with the existing contractor.

You are required to pay the remaining effluent removal charges on your 2023-2024 rates notice as it is an annual fee spread across the four quarterly payments. So, schedule your new service to begin from 1 July 2024.

WILL THE COST OF THE SERVICE INCREASE?

While we are not able to guarantee costs for individual properties, we are confident competitive pricing is available across the market.

WILL MY APPROVAL TO OPERATE CONDITIONS CHANGE?

There will be minor changes made to your current approval to operate document. An amended approval to operate will be sent to property owners after 30 June 2024.

CAN I FIND OUT HOW BIG MY SEPTIC TANK AND COLLECTION WELLS ARE?

Council may have records showing the volumes of approved septic tanks and collection wells. You can contact us on 02 4921 0769 to find out if we have records for your property.

HOW CAN I MONITOR THE CONTENTS OF MY PUMP OUT SYSTEM TO PREVENT THE TANK FROM OVERFLOWING?

There are two main ways to monitor your tank contents to prevent your tank from overflowing. One way is to physically check the contents using the inspection lid. You can also consider installing a high-level water alarm, which is connected to a panel (usually in your house) and sounds an alarm when levels are nearing full. There is a cost associated with installing a high-level water alarm.

HOW CAN I REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF WATER ENTERING MY TANKS?

You can install water-saving fixtures in your house, use a shower timer, reduce the use of baths, install dual flush toilets and choose water saving appliances to help reduce water use.

You can prevent stormwater from entering the tank by ensuring there are no entry points for stormwater runoff, the tank lid is located above the ground level and stormwater drainage on the property is maintained.

ARE THERE ANY OPTIONS TO DIVERT MY GREY WATER?

Grey water treatment systems accredited by NSW Health are available but requires approval in unsewered areas.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MY ONSITE SEWAGE SYSTEM?

Property owners are responsible for ensuring the facility on their property is maintained.

CAN I CONNECT MY PROPERTY TO THE HUNTER WATER SEWER AND AVOID SEEKING MY OWN SERVICE PROVIDER?

You will need to make enquires with Hunter Water about connecting your property to the sewer. If it is possible, you will need to make application directly to Hunter Water. Direct connection to the Hunter Water sewer network will mean you no longer require pump out services.

WHAT WILL COUNCIL REQUIRE FROM ME ONCE I FIND A SERVICE PROVIDER?

Please call us on 4921 0769 to provide us with details of your new service provider.

CONTACT US

If you would like to discuss your individual circumstances in more detail, please contact our Environmental Health Officers.

 **4921 0769**

 **COUNCIL@LAKEMAC.NSW.GOV.AU**

 **LAKEMAC.COM.AU/PUMP-OUT-CHANGES**