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Frequently Asked Questions



Legacy on-site wastewater bylaws review

General

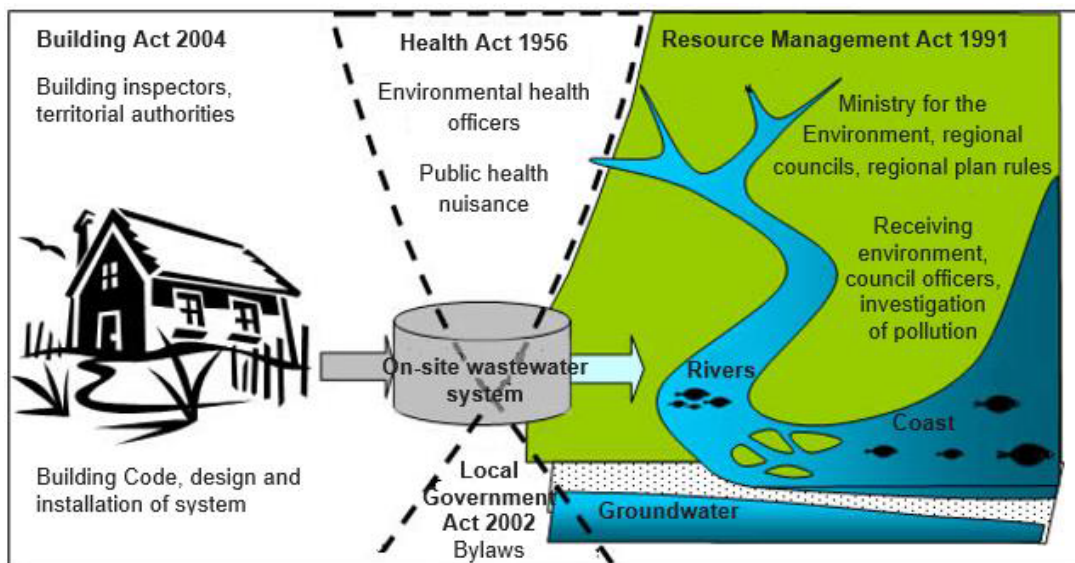
➤ What is an on-site wastewater system?

On-site wastewater systems provide treatment of domestic wastewater and return it to the environment within the boundaries of the property of origin. There are many different types of on-site systems, and they are designed to treat household wastewater to varying levels before it is released back into the environment.

To learn more visit [MfE: What are on-site wastewater systems?](#)

➤ What currently regulates on-site wastewater systems in Auckland?

National legislation for regulating on-site wastewater systems includes the Building Act 2004, Health Act 1956 and the Resource Management Act 1991. These Acts work in tandem to regulate different aspects of on-site wastewater management as demonstrated in the figure below.



Source: Ministry for the Environment, July 2008, Proposed National Environmental Standard for On-site Wastewater Systems

Note: The Auckland Unitary Plan gives effect to the Resource Management Act.

➤ **Why does Auckland Council regulate on-site wastewater systems?**

The Resource Management Act 1991 states that no person may discharge any contaminant into water or onto land unless expressly allowed by a rule in a regional plan or a resource consent. The Auckland Unitary Plan currently is the regional plan for Auckland which regulates these discharges via on-site wastewater systems.

View the unitary plan rules - [Auckland Unitary Plan E5 - on-site wastewater systems](#)

➤ **Do the Auckland Unitary Plan on-site wastewater rules apply to Waiheke and Great Barrier Island?**

Yes. The unitary plan on-site wastewater rules are regional rules and apply to the whole of Auckland.

➤ **How do I know if I have an on-site wastewater system?**

If you don't currently pay wastewater rates to Watercare and are not on a network, it is likely you are responsible for treating your own wastewater. Private on-site wastewater systems need to be present on properties that are not connected to a municipal sewage network.

Contact council at 09 301 0101 if you are unsure.

➤ **Can I be connected to Watercare's network?**

Watercare does not currently provide a wastewater network to all Auckland properties.

To find out more visit [Watercare: Connect your property](#)

Maintenance

➤ **Am I required to maintain my system?**

Yes. Design, installation and operation of the on-site wastewater system must be undertaken in accordance with Auckland's Technical Publication 58 On-site Wastewater System: Design and Management Manual 2004 (TP58).|

Get a copy of TP58 - [Technical Publication 58: On-site Wastewater System](#)

Learn more about how to maintain your system: [Auckland Council: Maintaining septic tanks](#)

➤ **Who pays for the system maintenance?**

System owners are responsible for covering costs of maintenance and ensuring proper maintenance is completed.

➤ **What happens if I don't maintain my system?**

If you are having difficulty maintaining your system, please call: 09 301 0101

Although not encouraged, council can issue infringement fines and abatement notices as well as recover any costs to remedy the situation.

➤ **Does my system need to be inspected?**

Yes. The Auckland Unitary Plan requires primary treatment (septic tank) and the disposal field to be inspected at least every three years and advanced systems serviced at least every six months by a suitably qualified service provider.

To find more about primary treatment, secondary treatment and disposal fields visit

[MfE: What are on-site wastewater systems?](#)

➤ **I have a very old system, do the rules apply to me? What if my system was allowed before the Unitary Plan became operative?**

All systems, regardless of age, must follow the general standards provided in section E5.6.1 of the Auckland Unitary Plan. [Auckland Unitary Plan E5 - on-site wastewater systems](#)

➤ **Do I need to provide maintenance records to Auckland Council?**

Records of each maintenance action must be retained and made available on the site for inspection by council.

(Waiheke bylaw) – pump out receipts must be sent to the Waiheke Service Centre within 14 days of the tank being pumped out.

Bylaw Review

➤ **What are the differences between the bylaw and unitary plan rules?**

The legacy bylaws provide no additional regulation to what is currently in the Auckland Unitary Plan and existing legislation.

To see more about the bylaws compared to the unitary plan, visit the consultation page www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/haveyoursay to view the Statement of Proposal and Findings Report.

➤ **Will the bylaw review affect my property rates?**

No.

➤ **Is this related to the Piha Lagoon on-site wastewater investigations?**

No. To find out more about the Piha Lagoon project visit [Our Auckland: Turning the tide on Piha](#) or you can email targetedinitiatives@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

➤ **Will the bylaw review affect my targeted pump out rate for properties in the former Waitakere City Council area?**

No.

➤ **Will the bylaw review affect the new long-term plan targeted water rate?**

No. To find out more about the targeted rate visit [Our Auckland: Targeted rates](#)

Improving water quality

➤ **How do I report a faulty, smelly and/or non-compliant system?**

To report any concerns, call 09 301 0101 or visit one of our [service centres](#).

➤ **What else is council doing about on-site wastewater pollution?**

Guidance Document 06 (revision of Auckland's Technical Publication 58 On-site Wastewater System: Design and Management Manual 2004) is now open for feedback until 12 October on the Auckland Design Manual website: [Auckland Design Manual: Technical guidance](#)

To find out more what Healthy Waters is doing, visit [improving water quality lagoons](#)

For a list of water projects in the 10-year budget, visit [10-year budget water projects](#)

Find out more:

[onsitewastewater@ aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:onsitewastewater@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/haveyoursay