

Have your say on the Draft On-site Effluent Treatment Plan Change



On-site effluent treatment (OSET) systems are for treating human wastewater on a property.

These include septic tanks and aerated wastewater treatment systems (AWTS), composting toilets, greywater use, long drops, and alternative technologies such as incinerating toilets.

Under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) the Bay of Plenty Regional Council is responsible for the management of discharges from OSET systems to ensure discharges do not contaminate the environment.

We have an OSET Regional Plan to help us manage these discharges but it is more than 10 years old and needs updating. The OSET Draft Plan Change 14 is to replace the current plan, and include the updated rules into the Regional Natural Resources Plan.

On-site Effluent Treatment Draft Plan Change 14 does not apply to dairy shed effluent or municipal sewerage discharges. There are separate rules in the Regional Natural Resources Plan for these.

We are seeking feedback on the Draft Plan Change from 24 July to 26 October 2018 and anyone can give feedback.

For more information and links to key documents visit www.boprc.govt.nz/osetplanchange

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Regulations for on-site systems

Under the RMA, any discharge needs resource consent unless there is a permitted activity rule in a regional plan. Discharges of domestic wastewater contain nutrients and bacteria that are a risk to the environment and human health.

A key goal of the OSET Draft Plan Change 14 is to make sure discharges of domestic wastewater are contained in the soil layer, and wastewater does not enter surface waters or groundwater. To achieve this goal, on-site effluent treatment systems must:

- Be designed for the factors at the site (e.g. soil type, distance to water, depth to groundwater).
- Meet relevant New Zealand standards.
- Be maintained so they continue to work well.

Existing Maintenance Zones

A Maintenance Zone is community where problems with on-site treatment systems are evident. A maintenance schedule is applied to manage risks and prevent system failures.

There are existing Maintenance Zones in the current OSET Regional Plan that are being carried over into the Draft Plan Change. These are:



Current Maintenance Zones

- Tanners Point, Tauranga Harbour
- Ongare Point, Tauranga Harbour
- Bryans Beach, Ohiwa
- Lake Rotoiti – Gisborne Point, Hinehopu
- Lake Rotomā – settlement area along SH30
- Lake Tarawera – settlement area
- Mamaku township

Reticulation is planned at Ongare Point, Lake Rotoiti, Lake Rotomā and Lake Tarawera. The Maintenance Zone requirements will cease to apply when planned reticulation occurs.

Maintenance Zone requirements

- Septic tanks must be pumped out every three years. If the tank size is a good size, the pump out frequency can be reduced to four, five or six yearly.

- An outlet filter must be installed.
- Soak holes must be replaced by a trench system.

Aerated wastewater treatment systems must also be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

There is no requirement to upgrade an existing septic tank to an aerated wastewater treatment system (AWTS). However, if an existing system fails and needs to be replaced, an AWTS may be necessary to fit on the site.

Existing septic tanks and AWTS in a Maintenance Zone also need to meet the minimum standards that apply across the region. If these standards are not met, the system can be upgraded or replaced to comply, or resource consent is needed.

What are the costs?

A septic tank pump-out costs around \$450-500.