

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS **PROPOSED SEWERAGE SCHEME** **LAKE WYANGAN, NERICON &** **THARBOGANG**

Q. Does this scheme include the Lake Wyangan public school?

A. Yes.

Q Will the rising main go behind the Tharbogang village or in front?

A. The common sewerage low pressure rising main will be in Dunn Street in front of the residents, no Council sewerage main is proposed to be out the back of residences. The low pressure sewerage rising main will be kept in public land such as road reserves. This makes accessibility practical in future years for maintenance etc.

Q. Will any machinery go in through my backyard? I have fruit trees and 50 years of TLC.

A. There will be disturbances on properties due to placement of the pump and grinder system but this will be kept to a minimum where practical.

Q. Will there be large excavators, diggers etc?

A. There will be excavation equipment and depending on accessibility and the type of work needed for each property the type of machinery may vary, but we will keep the machinery as small and practical as possible. There will be machinery excavating a hole for the tank and trenching required for connection of the plumbing system.

Q. Who is going to reinstate my landscape garden, my fruit trees etc.?

A. There would be space around your current septic tank and this will be utilised where practical as your current internal plumbing would drain to this point. Each lot will be different so therefore we will need to liaise with the each landowner as to the best fit, but there is a degree of flexibility so that is why we have taken the time to allow for survey of each site.

Q. Does the new system go where the septic system is now?

A. We won't be removing the existing septic tanks as this will require large excavation, but they will be decommissioned in accordance with Health Regulations. Depending on the size, configuration and type of existing septic tank it could be possible to use the existing void (tank) to put in the new pump system but this will be assessed for each lot. There would be space around your current septic tank and this will be utilised where practical as your current internal plumbing would drain to this point. Each lot will be different so therefore we will need to liaise with the each landowner as to the best fit, but there is a degree of flexibility so that is why we have taken the time to allow for survey of each site.

Q. Will they hook onto the existing pipe that goes into my house?

A. Yes we will have to use the existing plumbing system and there may need to be some minor modifications to this system as part of the installation process.

Q. Where the toilet comes out is that where they hook onto?

A. Yes the existing internal plumbing system of your house will be connected into the new low pressure grinder pump system.

Q. Why are you going into the front of Dunn St when there is a laneway out the back?

A. If there is public reserve, sewer infrastructure must be on Council land for accessibility any time day and night and is a visual area but advised that will be looked at as part of Council's initial investigation. This is a low pressure system that acts on a pump so relying on the the slope of the land (grading) is irrelevant so it can pump uphill or downhill. The resident raised a concern there was already a lot of utilities and established driveways out the front of the properties but it was explained that with directional boring is an option for these type of areas. If the line has to switch to the back and there is public reserve, this would be considered.

Q. I heard there are problems at Pelican Shores due to the pipes being small?

A. The grinder pump system grinds the effluent into a slurry, so the size of the pipes don't have to be large and therefore it is very unlikely that a low pressure sewerage rising main from a grinder pump system will block.

Q. Is there any cost to the householder for any of this?

A. No cost with installation and decommissioning of septic tanks and the disturbance to the site will be reinstated as best as possible.

Q. What will happen to the existing septic tanks?

A. They will be decommissioned, flushed out and backfilled but sometimes the pump may fit into the tank or they may go beside it, so need to do what is the best fit.

Q. Why are we going with individual grinders instead of a system like Beelbangera has?

A. Beelbangera has is a gravity system for each house that connects into a series of high pressure sewerage pump stations. Gravity sewers need to have a grade (fall) though the system therefore become quit deep and have larger pipes, the grinder pump system can be kept shallow, doesn't rely on gravity of slope of the land and therefore is easier to retrofit.

Q. Who pays for the maintenance of the unit?

A. With the internal workings of the grinder pump system, the rate payer pays the annual fees (rates), and therefore Council maintains these units. Council has replacement pumps on hand if they breakdown. Council plumbers are on call 24/7 so if a pump breaks down on a weekend, Council will go and fix. If there is continual failure of a pump due to the owner allowing the wrong foreign objects to enter the tank and pump unit therefore causing deliberate damage to the pump Council may require this property owner to replace the pump at their cost.

Q. Is there any extra cost when we join up?

A. There is cost for the installation and connection to the low pressure sewerage system but there will be annual sewerage rates and the electricity cost to run the pump which will be approximately \$50 per year for electricity usage.

Q. What happens if we don't want to connect to this system?

A. The proposal to sewer the villages have been in place for about 20 years and Council has been waiting for the Government funding to make it feasible. Individual property owners will have to connect. If there is 100% of a particular village community that do not want this scheme then this could be taken back to Council for a decision to not proceed, but given this is the only opportunity for Government funding, if it's not wanted this funding will never be available again in the future.

Councillor Dal Broi reinforced this response and advised that if all of Nericon residents signed a letter to say that they do not want it, then Council would most likely accept this and not do it, but he stated that it would be very difficult or impossible to construct sewer in the future years when they do want it.

Q. What is life expectancy of the tank?

A. The tanks have a very long life, generally more than 25 years but the pumps may need to be changed every 10 years depending on usage and this cost is borne by Council.

Q What happens with grey water and storm water?

A. Grey water goes to the grinder pump but storm water is not permitted to go into the sewerage system.

Q. What if I have 2 septic tanks on my property?

A. All internal sewerage pipes will be connected to the grinder pump system and septic tanks will be decommissioned. All properties will be surveyed to determine how the internal system will be configured.

Q. If Nericon opts out of the system does Tharbogang go into their timeslot?

A. Yes, this can be looked at

Q. Aerated Septic Tank – Can I keep this as an underwater rain tank for my garden?

A. The practicality of this can be explored, but given each system may be different it will need to be assessed on a case to case scenario.

Q. How big is the tank of the grinder pump?

A. Approximately 1 metre in diameter.

Q. How close can the grinder pump be to the house?

A. As long as we can excavate the hole and have access around the tank for maintenance then a minimum distance can be achieved.

Q. Who pays for pulling fences down to get into my property?

A. Any construction costs, access costs and reinstatement of fences are Council's costs.

Q. What type of access is needed for inspections? If I want to change the position of the septic to front who will pay for that?

A. Each property will be surveyed and property owners consulted so that the most practical location can be determined.

Q. Where can all this information be accessed and who will contact us?

A. Council will contact householders individually and decide the best place to put the tank. Griffith City Council's website will have information regarding this project.

Q. If the pumps are so good why can't all the houses join up or share a pump?

A. The plumbing of each house is separate and therefore will have their own individual tanks and pumps. Therefore if one house has a problem then it won't impact on the other houses. This is the same for gravity sewerage systems as there is a separate junction on each property.

Q. How does this fit in with the new subdivision at Lake Wyangan?

A. Developers will connect with this system.

Q. Who pays for decommissioning of septic tanks? Are the tanks going to be removed?

A. Removal of septic tanks requires large excavation, so the decommissioning will mostly be by backfilling. Council will pay for the cost of decommissioning.

Q. What happens if there is no other place than the backyard to put unit in.

A. Each property will be surveyed and the best location will be determined in consultation with the property owner.

Q. Where is the common Pump Station?

A. Council has already constructed a large sewerage pump station to cater for Lake Wyangan and Nericon at the corner of Smeeth Road & Boorga Road, this is then pumped via a high pressure sewerage rising main to a manhole in Kennedy Street which then flows to the Griffith Waste Water Reclamation Plant in Duchatel Road.

Q. Are there any odours from this type of treatment?

A. Only if you open the tank, this is a closed system and the alarm will go off if something is not working.

Q. How much noise does it make?

A. The individual pumps in each property are fully submerged pumps and will only operate It only works when the tank volume reaches a height to start the pump. Given the pump is quite small and will be submerged the noise is very difficult to hear.

Q. If you have more than one toilet is there more charges?

A. No.

Q. Are the lids safe eg. small children playing on them?

A. Yes, the tank is very durable and the lids are sealed tightly. Whilst they are strong they are not trafficable and can't be driven on or placed in driveways etc.

Q. Do we have to change the toilets inside the house?

A. No. The internal plumbing will remain the same, only the connection point to the grinder pump system will need to be altered.

Q. My septic tank has a grease trap as well, will this bypass the septic.

A. Yes it goes straight into the grinder system and Council will decommission the old septic system that is external to the house. Internal (sewerage pipe work inside the building) plumbing will not be altered.

Q. Fawcett Drive & Wyangan Estate are not included in this?

A. They are not included in this project, but if there are funds left over then Council can utilise this to expand the project into other areas.

Q. Why does Pelican Shore already have this system?

A. The sewerage system including the common sewerage pump station for Pelican was installed and paid for by the developer.