

## WORKING TOWARDS SAFE & RESPONSIBLE ON-SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT ON-SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION SERIES

### DO YOU HAVE APPROVAL FOR YOUR ON-SITE SEWAGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM?

### APPROVAL TO OPERATE YOUR OSMS

This factsheet provides information on approval requirements for OSMS's, including AWTS's serviced by a service agent.

The Local Government Act 1993 requires councils to regulate the installation, monitor the operation and keep a register of all OSMS within a local government area. Under this legislation, Griffith City Council regulates the installation and operation of OSMS.

Approval is required for:

1. The installation or construction of an OSMS
2. Alteration of an OSMS, and
3. The on-going operation of an OSMS.

The Approval to Install or Construct an OSMS is a one-off approval. The Approval to Alter an OSMS is required when any work is being done to the existing system (e.g. replacement of an absorption trench, upgrades to the OSMS, or additional plumbing fixtures and bedrooms being added to the house).

The Approval to Operate an OSMS is an on-going approval that is required at a frequency which is dependent on the risk category (high, medium or low) of your OSMS (refer to factsheet 9). The Approval to Operate is valid for the period of time stated in the approval. If the Approval to Operate is no longer valid, the owner of the OSMS must reapply for the approval. Approval to Operate is also required to be renewed when/if the property changes ownership. The requirement for ongoing approval ensures that an OSMS is continuing to meet environmental and health performance standards.

### YES!

Even though your AWTS is regularly serviced and checked by a service agent and a copy of the report is forwarded to Griffith City Council, you are still required to have a current Approval to Operate. The internal components of an AWTS are checked by service agents however service agents do not always check the public health and environmental impacts of the effluent disposal or irrigation system.

As an AWTS has the ability to dispose of the effluent above ground there is more chance of it coming into contact with humans or running off to a water course, drainage or supply channel or other water body and adjoining land. If the treatment system isn't working adequately, this can pose a serious risk to the environment and the public health of the community.

### DO I NEED TO APPLY FOR AN APPROVAL TO OPERATE IF MY AWTS IS REGULARLY SERVICED BY A SERVICE AGENT?