

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

WHAT ARE THE
MOST COMMON
PROBLEMS WITH
YOUR OSMS?

PROBLEMS WITH YOUR ON-SITE SEWAGE
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

This factsheet outlines key indicators that may mean there is a problem with your OSMS and penalties associated with a failing OSMS.

The most common failure associated with an OSMS is associated with the disposal area. Failure can often be linked to large volumes of water going through the system, incorrectly maintained systems or disposal areas, or inadequate size of the disposal area.

Signs that your system isn't working correctly include:

- ▶ Wastewater begins to back up into the household pipes. This is commonly first noticed when fixtures such as toilets or sinks won't drain away easily or you notice sewage overflowing from a small grated pipe located outside the building called a yard gully.
- ▶ The ground becomes soggy around the disposal area and effluent may seep from the soil to the surface or begin to pool in areas. There will usually be an unpleasant smell associated with this and can create a health risk.
- ▶ An unusual/unpleasant odour is detected around the tank and/or disposal area.
- ▶ Alarms are activated on your system (AWTS only).

PENALTIES
FOR POORLY
OPERATING
SYSTEMS

With failing OSMS systems pollution of stormwater, rivers, groundwater, irrigation and drainage channels can occur.

Water polluters can face costly clean-up notices, on-the-spot fines and significant penalties of up to \$250, 000 for individuals and \$1, 000, 000 for corporations under the Protection of Environment Operations Act 1997.



WARNING!

If you notice anything different about the way your system is operating, or notice the above occurring, contact a plumber or service agent immediately.