

Wastewater Management Systems

in Building Control Areas

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Acronyms	Full form
NT	Northern Territory
PCA	Plumbing Code of Australia
WMS	Wastewater Management System

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1. Introduction

If a property is **not** connected to sewer a different way to collect, treat and dispose of wastewater will be required.

Domestic wastewater is wastewater originating from household or personal activities including: toilets, urinals, kitchens, bathrooms (including shower, washbasins, bath, spa bath (but not a spa), and laundries. Domestic wastewater includes wastewater from facilities serving staff/employees/residents in institutional, commercial, and industrial establishments, Domestic wastewater does **not** include commercial and industrial wastes, large-scale laundry activities, and any stormwater flows.

A wastewater management system (WMS) is a physical collection of pipes and chambers that receive, treat and distribute domestic wastewater to a land application area or a holding tank. WMSs can include onsite wastewater management systems such as septic tanks, other treatments systems or community wastewater management systems.

When installing a wastewater management system at a property located in a building control area you will need to follow the steps and instructions in the sections below.

The technical requirements that industry needs to follow are outlined in a section 5 below.

To check if the land is located in a building control area you can go to the [NT Land Information System website](#).

The laws that apply to installing and using WMSs in building control areas are the *Building Act 1993* and Regulations, and the contact agency is Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (08 8999 8985).

If the property is located outside building control areas then you need to follow the Public Health Directorate administrative procedures which can be found at nt.gov.au.

Depending on the size and complexity of the wastewater management system either a registered certifying plumber and drainer, certifying plumber and drainer (design) or a certifying engineer (hydraulic) will need to be engaged. Go to section 2 to read about choosing the correct professional for the wastewater management system needs.

2. Who can design, install and certify wastewater management systems?

WMSs that treat less than 2,000 L domestic wastewater per day

When installing a WMS that has a product approval and treats up to 2,000 litres of wastewater per day the system can be certified by one of the following registered Building Practitioners:

- certifying plumber and drainer
- certifying plumber and drainer (design)
- certifying engineer (hydraulic)

This means that the above building practitioners can design and certify WMSs that hold a product approval with the Public Health Directorate and that meet the “deemed to satisfy” requirements in the Plumbing Code of Australia (PCA) and relevant Australian Standards for WMSs.

As long as one of the above building practitioners is engaged to certify a WMS, a plumber and drainer licensed under the *Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Act 1983* can install and maintain the WMS.

WMSs that will treat more than 2,000 L domestic wastewater per day including a series of WMSs

When installing a WMS that is expected to treat more than 2,000 L per day, or a complex WMS, a registered certifying engineer (hydraulic) must design and certify the WMS.

This means a certifying engineer (hydraulic) can design and certify a WMS as a “performance solution” that:

- does not meet the “deemed to satisfy” requirements of the PCA;
- is outside the scope of the relevant Australian Standards; or
- does not have a product approval from the Public Health Directorate.

As long as a certifying engineer (hydraulic) designs and certifies the WMS a plumber and drainer licensed under the *Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Act 1983* can install and maintain the WMS.

3. Installing a wastewater management system alongside other works

When a WMS is to be installed at the same time as building a house, industrial or commercial development the WMS must be included in the building permit.

Before granting an occupancy permit the building certifier may request the section 40 compliance certificate for the WMS with any referenced plans (if appropriate).

It is mandatory to notify the Director of Building Control by contacting Building Advisory Services (08 8999 8985) of the completion of drainage works, including wastewater management systems prior to covering up those works.

4. Installing a wastewater management system on its own

If the WMS is to be installed without any other building work, for example replacing or upgrading an existing WMS the installing plumber or drainer must:

- contact Building Advisory Services before starting work and a plumbing only permit will then be included on the building record.
- notify the Director of Building Control by contacting Building Advisory Services (08 8999 8985) of the completion of drainage works, including WMSs prior to covering up those works.

- within 7 days of the work being completed submit the section 40 compliance certificate with any referenced plans (if appropriate) to Building Advisory Services to be included on the building record. The submission can be sent in the following ways:
 - Email to Bas.Files@nt.gov.au
 - Mail to Building Advisory Services
Department of Infrastructure Planning and Logistics
GPO Box 1680
DARWIN NT 0801
 - In person to Building Advisory Services
Floor 1, Energy House
18-20 Cavenagh Street

5. Which standards and technical requirements apply to wastewater management systems?

All plumbing and drainage works, including WMS, installed at properties located in building control areas must comply with the current version of the [Plumbing Code of Australia](#).

The Plumbing Code of Australia refers to AS/NZS 3500.2 *Plumbing and drainage – Sanitary plumbing and drainage* and WMSs must comply with the relevant sections of AS/NZS 3500.2.

AS/NZS 3500.2 also refers to the following standards and WMSs must comply with the relevant sections of:

- AS/NZS 1546.1 Septic tanks
- AS/NZS 1546.2 Waterless composting toilets
- AS/NZS 1546.3 Aerated wastewater treatment systems

Certain sections of AS/NZS 1547 On-site domestic wastewater management are referred to in the AS/NZS 1546 series and if relevant will need to be met.

The technical requirements of the [2014 Code of Practice for On-site Wastewater Management](#), also known as the Code of Practice for Small On-site Sewage and Sullage Treatment Systems and the Disposal or Reuse of Sewage Effluent also apply to works carried out in building control areas.