

## Septic tank systems

# What do I need to know to install a septic tank?

If you are planning to design and install a septic tank system, you need to be aware of the requirements for managing septic tanks under the Proposed Natural Resources Regional Plan (NRRP).

Septic tanks installed lawfully prior to 1991 don't require Environment Canterbury approval. However, systems installed after this date will need approval from both:

- your local district council (building consent for the installation), and
- Environment Canterbury (for the subsequent discharge of contaminants to land)

Approval from the latter can be by way of a permitted activity provided certain conditions are met, or if they cannot be met, by resource consent.

With the public notification of the NRRP on 3 July 2004, new rules have come into effect for the discharge of contaminants onto land from septic tanks.

As a quick guide for determining whether or not you require a consent for the discharge please check the following:

1. Does the discharge from your disposal field occur within 20 metres of a river, lake, artificial watercourse, or the Coastal Marine Area?
2. Does the discharge occur where the land is located over an unconfined or semi-confined aquifer where the highest groundwater is less than six metres from the ground surface? (refer to the NRRP map volume or contact Customer Services at Environment Canterbury)
3. Is the separation distance between the discharge and the property boundary less than 50 metres to the down gradient boundary in the direction of groundwater flow at the site, and 30 metres to any other property boundary?
4. Will the discharge occur on land with a slope greater than 20 degrees?
5. Will the discharge occur at an elevation greater than 1000 metres above sea level?
6. Will the discharge occur on a subdivision proposed or approved after 1991 where the lot size is less than four hectares? (not applicable in Kaikoura District)



**If the answer is YES to any of the above conditions then you will require a consent.**

**If the answer is NO to all of the above conditions it is possible you will meet the permitted activity requirements of the NRRP but you MUST STILL submit your proposed plan to Environment Canterbury for approval.**

For further information, please contact Customer Services at Environment Canterbury 0800 EC INFO (0800 32 4636).

This factsheet is also available at [www.ecan.govt.nz](http://www.ecan.govt.nz)

E04/59