

Council happenings . . .

with Mayor
Glenn Wall

Review of sewage program

Dungog Council will shortly begin a review of its current on-site sewage management program and develop a new strategy in consultation with the community.

Since council's on-site sewage management strategy commenced in late 2001 there has been a total of 3,678 inspections and reinspections carried out.

Council's records indicate there are 2,680 on-site sewage management systems in the shire outside the township of Clarence Town.

Of these systems, 687 have been classified as high risk or fail, 826 as medium risk and 1093 as low risk.

Seventy four new or proposed systems are yet to be classified.

In the 08/09 financial year the number of systems classified as high risk/fail has been reduced by 138. The medium risk category has risen by 66 and low risk has increased by 136 systems. This reduction in problematic septic systems demonstrates the effectiveness of the current strategy."

Considering the problems identified with on-site disposal of effluent on small blocks, mains sewer is the preferred option for villages like Gresford/Martins Creek, Paterson and Vacy.

Initial efforts, however, to secure funding and prioritise this work through the NSW State Government and Hunter Water Corporation have not been successful to date.

Given the provision of sewer in the village areas is unlikely in the short to medium term and in light of the findings of the inspection program to date, council will shortly review the program.

The new program will need to consider sustainable and affordable options in the village areas, provide for the ongoing monitoring and improvement of the high-risk septic systems and consider reasonable long-term management strategies for medium and low risk systems.

Any new strategy will be developed in full consultation with the community."

30 September 2009