



LOCAL ORDERS POLICY – DECOMMISSIONING OF SEPTIC TANKS

Dungog Shire Council

2023

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1 OBJECTIVE

To facilitate the safe, hygienic and environmentally sound decommissioning of septic tanks after premises are connected to the sewerage system or replacement tanks are installed and the system has become redundant.

The objective will be achieved if:

- a) Disused septic tanks do not become the subject of any complaint, nuisance or environmental degradation.

2 PRINCIPLES

1. When the sewer is available, all premises must be connected to the system with septic systems decommissioned.
2. When new septic systems are installed and the old system becomes redundant they must be decommissioned.
3. Septic tanks are to be decommissioned so as not to cause any nuisance, pollution or environmental concern.

3 POLICY STATEMENT

Council may order any person to carry out works as specified in the order to ensure that redundant septic tanks are decommissioned in accordance with the attached guideline or converted for stormwater use subject to Council approval and conditions.

4 AREA WHERE THIS POLICY APPLIES

This policy applies to all properties within the Dungog Shire Council area.

5 AT WHAT TIME WILL COUNCIL ISSUE ORDERS

Council will issue an order where redundant septic systems remain in place and have not been decommissioned in accordance with this Policy or with approval, converted for stormwater use.

6 IN WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES WILL COUNCIL ISSUE ORDERS

When a property

- has been connected to mains sewer or
- a new septic system has been installed and the existing system has become redundant.

For the purposes of this policy:

- connected to sewer is when Council is advised that HWC have conducted a final inspection and approved the connection to sewer and associated drainage.
- conversion to stormwater use is when a septic tank has been converted for the storage and management of stormwater on a

property in accordance with a Council approval and Councils policy for this conversion.

As a general rule Council staff will use order 124/21 in circumstances where septic tanks have not been decommissioned however, other orders in Sec 124 of the Local Government Act 1993 may be used if more appropriate for the conditions on individual properties.

Section 124 includes but is not limited to:

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Order	To do what?	In what circumstances?	To whom?
21	To do or refrain from doing such things as are specified in the order to ensure that land is, or premises are, placed or kept in a safe or healthy condition	The land or premises are not in a safe or healthy condition	Owner or occupier of land or premises
22	To store, treat, process, collect, remove, dispose of or destroy waste which is on land or premises in the manner specified in the order, provided that it is not inconsistent with regulations made under the <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i>	Waste is present or generated on the land or premises and is not being dealt with satisfactorily, and is not regulated or controlled by, or subject to, a licence or notice granted or issued under the <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i>	Owner or occupier of land or premises, owner of or person responsible for the waste or for any receptacle or container in which the waste is contained
22A	To remove or dispose of waste that is on any residential premises or to refrain from keeping waste on those premises	The waste is, in the opinion of an environmental health officer (within the meaning of the <i>Public Health Act 1991</i>), causing or is likely to cause a threat to public health or the health of any individual	Owner or occupier of the premises
25	Not to use or permit the use of a human waste storage facility on premises after a specified date	It is necessary for the purpose of protecting public health	Owner or occupier of premises

7 GUIDELINES FOR THE DECOMMISSIONING OF SEPTIC TANKS

- a) When a septic system becomes redundant or when the subject premises is connected to the sewer of the Hunter Water Corporation all septic tanks are to be decommissioned.
- b) An approved contractor is to remove all effluent and sludge and dispose of it at a Licenced Waste Water Disposal Depot.
- c) Home owners are to save the pumpout/cleanout receipt and provide it on request to Hunter Water Corporation or Council inspectors as proof of service.
- d) After pump-out/clean-out, tanks are to be dusted with slaked lime to sterilise and neutralise the tanks.
- e) A hole adequate for drainage purpose is to be made in the bottom of the tanks.
- f) After treatment with slaked lime, the concrete lids and portion of the tank walls are to be broken to a minimum of 300mm below ground level.
- g) The tanks are to be filled with solid, non-putrescible fill; with the ground surface made good.

8 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Responsible Officer:	Director Planning and Environment
Council or	Council
Management:	
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