



— City of —
Melville

ALMONDBURY ROAD ARDROSS 6153 WESTERN AUSTRALIA

DECOMMISSIONING OF SEPTIC TANKS

Under Health Act Regulations, where a property has already been connected to the sewer the owner must decommission any disused sewerage apparatus, such as disused septic tank systems at the following times:

- ◆ If there is a material change in the use of the premises, decommissioning must occur **not more than 60 days** after the day on which the change in use occurred.
- ◆ Decommissioning must occur **not more than 60 days** after ownership of the property has changed.
- ◆ If foundations for a building on the premises are to be built closer than 1.2 metres from the apparatus or a building is to be constructed above the apparatus, **decommissioning must occur before** building works commence.

Procedure for decommissioning

- ◆ Septic tanks, leach drains and soakwells must be completely emptied by a Licensed Liquid Waste Contractor.
- ◆ After emptying, septic tanks, leach drains and soakwells must be completely removed from the site.
- ◆ The excavations must be filled with clean fill eg., yellow sand and then thoroughly compacted.

If it is not practicable to remove septic tanks leach drains or soakwells (eg., if access is not available for machinery)-

- ◆ All septic tanks, leach drains and soakwells must be completely emptied by a Licensed Liquid Waste Contractor.
- ◆ The lids must be removed and the bottom of septic tanks broken up.
- ◆ The tanks, leach drains and soakwells must be backfilled with clean fill eg., yellow sand and then thoroughly compacted.

If the property is to be sold and since the cost associated with such decommissioning can exceed \$1,000, it is necessary to obtain some assurances that decommissioning has already occurred. If it has not occurred, such costs should be taken into consideration by purchasers at the time of offer and acceptance, because the legislation states that it is the “new property owner” who must carry out the required decommissioning with sixty (60) days of a change of property ownership.

Further information about septic system decommissioning can be obtained by contacting the City of Melville, Health Services on 9364 0275 or by phoning the Wastewater Management Section of the Health Department of WA on 9388 4999.