

Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines

Introduction to the NSW Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines

The Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines, released by the Office of Local Government, have been published to assist councils in NSW to manage and regulate Onsite Wastewater Management Systems (OWMS) in a systematic way that is cost-effective, consistent with regulatory standards and Government policies, and in accordance with best practice.

OWMS include all systems operated with approval under section 68 of the *Local Government Act* 1993 (LG Act), which includes single households, motels, caravan parks and private resorts.

As Councils revise their policies, the Guidelines provide an opportunity to raise professional standards across the whole Onsite Wastewater Management (OWM) sector.

They outline best practice which should be followed by designers, installers, service technicians and regulators, and provide guidance on regulatory expectations and appropriate levels of service delivery.

Where the level of service outlined in the Guidelines is delivered by designers, installers and service technicians, and is required and appropriately enforced by regulators, owners and occupiers can be reassured that public health and the environment are appropriately protected.

Many council officers with a regulatory responsibility for on-site wastewater management do not have a practical background in on-site wastewater system design. This course will broaden their skills and experience and improve their confidence in assessing applications and regulating operating systems.

This one-day course presents an opportunity to find out about the new Guidelines; what has changed, and how to use them.

Hear first-hand from the authors of the new Guidelines.

This course provides clear indication of what Council Environmental Health Officers should expect to see in design reports; and for Designers, presents a clear picture of what their design reports should include to meet the requirements of the new Guidelines.

Introduction to the NSW Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines

The course will be held at:

Kingscliff Beach Hotel
102 Marine Parade, Kingscliff NSW
16 April 2026

Sessions include:

Introduction to the Guidelines

- What is new?
- What has changed?

Strategic functions of the Guidelines

- Useful tools for OWM strategies
- Operational strategies
- Application assessment

Site and Soil Evaluation

- What Regulators should expect and what Designers should deliver in design reports
- Provision for Tiny Houses

System Sizing

- Wastewater generation and tank sizing
- Linear Loading Rate
- Water and Nutrient Balance Modelling

Risk-based assessment of Buffer Distances

- Viral die-off modelling

Practical resources in the Guidelines

- Checklists for Regulators and Designers

Discussion, Questions and Answers



Centre for Environmental Training

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Office of Local Government
olg.nsw.gov.au



Onsite Wastewater Management
Guidelines

April 2025



**Onsite Wastewater
Management Guidelines**
What's new, and how to use them

North Coast, NSW

16 April 2026

Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines

Course Presenters

Heather Murphy, BAppSc, Senior Consultant at Whitehead & Associates Environmental Consultants Pty Ltd. Heather has over five years' experience in Local Government roles with responsibility for on-site wastewater management, followed by ten years' consulting in on-site wastewater management and design. During this time, she has coordinated and implemented a program of on-site wastewater management system inspections on behalf of local government. In addition, Heather has undertaken many inspections of on-site wastewater management systems as part of audits and troubleshooting exercises prior to designing upgrades to rectify system problems. Heather routinely undertakes site assessments and designs domestic and commercial on-site wastewater management systems for a wide range of facilities, and provides support to Local Government in regulation and compliance for environmental and on-site wastewater management.

Heather is principal co-author of the recent revision of the *NSW Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines*.

Joe Whitehead, BSc, MAppSc, PGCE, FGS, Director of the Centre for Environmental Training, Australia and Principal at Whitehead & Associates Environmental Consultants Pty Ltd, a consultancy specialising in on-site wastewater management. Joe is an Environmental and Engineering Geologist with wide and varied experience in geotechnical aspects of site evaluation, waste and wastewater management, in Europe, America and Australasia. Joe has extensive expertise in land capability assessment, design, management, inspection and troubleshooting of domestic and commercial on-site and decentralised systems on constrained sites.

Joe has written onsite wastewater guidelines for several State and Territory government agencies, Domestic Wastewater Management Plans and Strategies for NSW, Tasmanian and Victorian Councils, and has coordinated and contributed to the *Model Land Capability Assessment*, the *Victorian Land Capability Assessment Framework (MAV)*, *Designing and Installing On-Site Wastewater Systems* (Water NSW). Joe was co-author of the Code of Practice Literature Scoping Study (EPA VIC).

Joe is co-author of the *NSW Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines*.

Course Enrolment Form (4062)

If you would like to enrol in this course, please complete your details below or on-line at
[Course Schedule – Centre for Environmental Training](#)

Participant Name	
Organisation	
Billing Address	
	Postcode
Purchase Order Number	
(if required by your organisation for invoicing purposes)	
Tel	
e-mail	

PLEASE REGISTER ME FOR:

Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines – What's new, and how to use them 16 April 2026 ☐

The course will be held from 8.30 am to 4.30 pm.

Venue: Kingscliff Beach Hotel, 102 Marine Parade, Kingscliff NSW 2487

Course fee: \$1,000.00 + \$100.00 GST = Total \$1,100.00
10% discount for two or more registrations from the same organisation.

Course fee includes comprehensive course notes, lunch and morning and afternoon tea. Each participant will receive a certificate outlining the detailed content and duration of the course.

Payment Terms and Conditions: Payment can be made by EFT or credit card (a 2.6% surcharge applies). Places will be confirmed upon receipt of payment into our account. If you are unable to attend a course, you will need to advise us of cancellation at least 14 days prior to the course otherwise no refund will be provided. A full refund will be given where notice of cancellation is given more than 14 days before the course. 10% administration charge is applicable to all course transfers due to illness/non-attendance.

The Centre for Environmental Training
197 Main Road
CARDIFF NSW 2285

Telephone: 02 4954 4997

E-mail: mail@environmentaltraining.com.au

Web: www.environmentaltraining.com.au

Introduction to the NSW Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines

By attending you will gain:

Practical review and explanation of the new elements of the revised Onsite Wastewater Management Guidelines.

Examples of how Regulators can use the Guidelines to better manage OWMS.

Clarity on what Regulators should expect of Designers and what Designers are expected to deliver to comply with the requirements of the Guidelines.

Scenarios and worked examples using actual wastewater design data used to:

- Illustrate the implementation of practical strategies;
- Show how Linear Loading Rates, Water and Nutrient Balances and viral die-off models are used in design, assessment and approval;
- Demonstrate risk-based assessment of buffers.

Comprehensive course notes and a certificate of attendance.

This course is particularly relevant for Environmental Health Officers and other Regulators wanting to make the most of the new and improved OWM approaches in the Guidelines in better managing OWM and for staff involved in revising Council OWM policies.

It is equally important that Designers attend to understand what is required for compliant design.

Councils should encourage attendance by Site and Soil Assessors preparing Wastewater Reports to support Development Applications in their Local Government Area.



Onsite i Site

All course participants receive a complimentary subscription to our on-site wastewater information portal

www.onsiteisite.com