

## REQUIREMENT TO CONNECT TO SEWERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY (COMMUNITY POLICY)

### 1 Scope:

This policy provides parameters for identification of extension of sewerage scheme areas and for connection requirements, repayment of costs associated with the construction of new sewerage works and application of rates and charges within established populated areas of Rockhampton Regional Council. This policy does not cover new development/rezoning applications.

### 2 Purpose:

To assist in identifying when a public sewerage scheme is required and the application of costs, rates and charges on the relevant property owners in existing urban areas of the Rockhampton Regional Council region.

### 3 Related Documents:

**Primary**  
Nil

**Secondary**  
*Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*  
Rockhampton Regional Council Revenue Statement

### 4 Definitions:

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

Council	Rockhampton Regional Council
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### 5 Policy Statement:

#### 5.1 Public Health and Environment Issue

Where either the public health or environmental non-viability of individual septic or on-site treatment systems (now or as the population density/numbers increase in an area) becomes a problem for the community, a public sewerage system becomes essential. Where new development/rezoning is undertaken, the decision is in accordance with existing planning and environmental laws and policy. However, even in such situations there are issues around timing and need but these are manageable with short, medium and long term arrangements agreed before a development is approved and are not covered by this policy.

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Public health and environmental issues are technical matters and it is a requirement that Council be satisfied that the threshold for such considerations have been met before:

- Requiring a public sewer system to be installed; and
- Setting mandatory timeframes for individual properties to be connected.

## 5.2 Timing

Under s168 of the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*, the Council as the water service provider may, by notice require a property owner to connect to the relevant infrastructure within a sewerage scheme area with a minimum notice of 20 days following declaration of the water supply or sewerage scheme service area. It is envisaged that the 20 day minimum may not be practical as property owners need to engage tradespersons to undertake the required works. Under this policy connections are required within 12 months from the date of ability to connect to the water and/or sewerage network; however in respect of the Mount Morgan Sewerage Scheme (Stage 2), connection will be required on the request of the property owner, the failure of any on site system or the sale of the property.

## 5.3 Cost Attribution

The following cost attribution methods will be considered under this policy:

**5.3.1** The majority of a directly affected community request connection to a public sewerage system – **full charge for local infrastructure and relevant infrastructure charges.**

**5.3.2** The property owner's disposal system is not appropriate (fully or partially) and there is no real public benefit (health or environmental) in having that property connected to the sewer - **full charge for local infrastructure and relevant infrastructure charges.**

**5.3.3** The property owner's disposal system is not working properly (fully or partially) and there is a real public benefit (health or environmental) in having that property connected to the sewer - **full charge for local infrastructure and relevant infrastructure charges discounted to recognise the potential remaining life of the existing on-site sewerage disposal system.**

**5.3.4** The property owner's disposal system is working but there is a greater public benefit (health or environmental) in having that property connected to the sewer - **full charge for local infrastructure and relevant infrastructure charges discounted to recognise the potential remaining life of the existing on-site sewerage disposal system.**

It is important to note that the effect of any discount given to property owners will be required to be collected across the rest of the properties serviced by the total sewerage scheme.

## 5.4 Payment Methods

Two basic approaches are applicable in relation to payment options, and those are:

**5.4.1** No Council assistance; or

**5.4.2** Council assistance (including hardship recognition).

In the first option the property owner pays the charge at the time of connection. In the second option, Council may choose to apply a special sewerage charge to the benefited area to recoup the costs over a number of years (variable depending on the cost of the scheme and as Council directs; i.e. the payment period may be

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longer for hardship cases; e.g. pensioners). Payment periods will be decided by Council for each individual area.

#### **5.5 Rates**

The appropriate sewerage charge is applied upon the connection of the property to the sewerage system, or upon the expiry of the connection period referred to in 5.2, whichever is earlier. Charges will be in accordance with Council's current Revenue Statement.

#### **5.6 Plumbing Works**

All plumbing fixtures on the premises, including water closet (toilet), bathroom, laundry and kitchen, are required to be connected to the sewer. This does not include swimming pool water or backwash, which may only be discharged to Council's sewer with the express consent of Council.

#### **5.7 Septic Tank Works**

Any existing septic tank must be pumped out by a licensed tanker/operator. The septic tank must be broken up at the top to finish at least 250 millimetres below ground level. A free draining hole is to be provided at the base of the tank, and then the whole septic chamber is to be filled in with sand/soil.

#### **5.8 Extensions of Time for Connection or Payment**

Any application for an extension of the connection period referred to in 5.2, or the application of the applicable rates and charges must be submitted in writing to Council. The General Manager Regional Services will assess each application and notify the property owner of the outcome. Should the General Manager Regional Services determines that the application should be refused it will be referred to Council through the Water Committee prior to a final determination.

### **6 Review Timelines:**

This policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

- 6.1** The related information is amended or replaced; or
- 6.2** Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the Council.

### **7 Responsibilities:**

Sponsor	Chief Executive Officer
Business Owner	General Manager Regional Services
Policy Owner	Manager Fitzroy River Water
Policy Quality Control	Corporate Improvement and Strategy

**EVAN PARDON**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

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