

Information Guide

SEPTIC TANK

MANAGEMENT

Do you live near a waterway or by the beach? Maintaining your septic system helps protect your health, local waterways, and the environment – here's how!

Did you know that around 30% of homes in Australia rely on septic tanks? If not properly maintained, these systems can pose serious risks to our health and the environment.

Sandy areas, such as beachside suburbs, require special attention when it comes to septic systems. Because sandy soils drain quickly, untreated wastewater can seep into groundwater and contaminate nearby waterways.

Poorly maintained septic systems can impact not only your health but also local recreational areas, drinking water quality, and local flora and fauna. If you live near creeks or the ocean, the risk of contamination is even greater, affecting swimming, fishing, and other outdoor activities.

COMMON SYSTEM FAILURE WARNING SIGNS



Homeowners and occupiers are legally required to maintain their on-site wastewater systems in proper working condition. If you notice any of the warning signs mentioned below, you should contact your local council as soon as possible:

- **Slow draining sinks, showers, and toilet**
- **Gurgling sounds in the plumbing**
- **Sewage backups inside the house**
- **Unpleasant odours around the septic tank or drainfield**
- **Standing water or wet spots near the septic tank or drainfield**
- **Bright green, lush grass over the drainfield (even during dry weather).**



MAINTENANCE TIPS

• Schedule regular maintenance

- Establish a routine maintenance plan with your septic provider based on your system's needs.
- Keep an eye on your system's performance and schedule inspections if anything seems unusual.

• Protect your drain field

- Keep vehicles, heavy equipment, large structures and livestock off the drain field to prevent soil compaction.
- Ensure stormwater is directed away from the septic system to avoid oversaturation.
- Avoid planting deep-rooted trees near the system, as their roots can damage pipes.

• Choose the right system for sandy soils

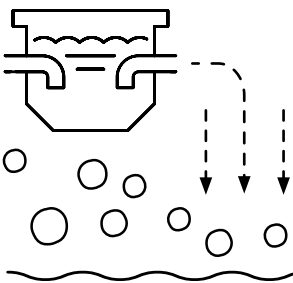
- Consult a wastewater specialist to ensure your system is designed for sandy conditions and to choose plant species that won't harm your septic system
- Monitor nearby waterways
- Watch for signs of contamination – like algae blooms, murky water, or bad smells. If you notice anything unusual, report it to your local council immediately.

By following these steps, you can help protect your local environment while keeping your septic system in top shape!

How do septic systems pollute in sandy coastal areas?

STEP 1

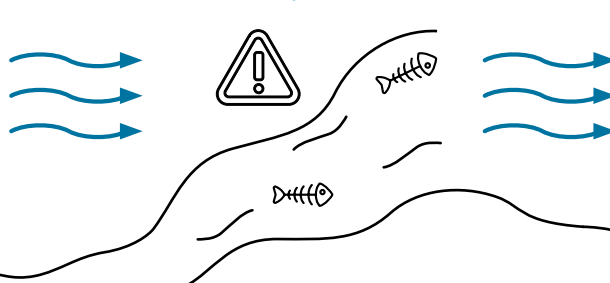
Untreated wastewater in sandy soils



Sandy soils drain quickly, allowing untreated wastewater to seep into groundwater.

STEP 2

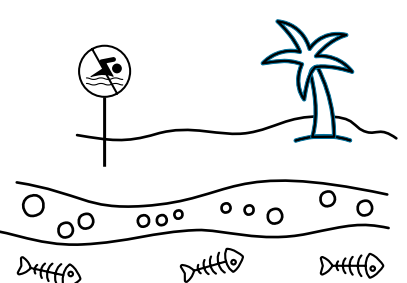
Contamination of groundwater and waterways



This can contaminate nearby waterways, especially in beachside suburbs.

STEP 3

Environmental and recreational impact



Contamination affects swimming, fishing, and local wildlife.