

When do the new on-site wastewater rules come into effect?

New rules in the Regional Resource Management Plan come into effect from **1 October 2012**. The Regional Resource Management Plan applies across the whole Hawke's Bay region, except in the 'Coastal Environment' where the proposed Regional Coastal Environment Plan applies.

Changes to on-site wastewater rules applicable in the coastal environment do not come into effect from 1 October 2012 because the coastal plan is pending separate approvals from Environment Court processes. In the meantime, the current on-site wastewater rules in the Regional Coastal Environment Plan continue to apply.

If you are not sure which regional plan applies to your property please contact the Regional Council.

Who will the new on-site wastewater rules affect?

The new on-site wastewater rules will potentially affect any person that has an on-site wastewater system – whether it is an old system, or whether they need to install a system to treat the wastewater from the new home they are building.



Parts of a secondary on-site wastewater treatment system that can be seen above ground.

The new rules mean that a large number of people who previously required resource consent for their existing wastewater systems will no longer need one. Conversely, some people who previously would not have required a discharge permit will need to obtain one.

The new rules focus mainly on ensuring that new on-site wastewater systems are appropriately designed for the location in which they will be constructed.

Some examples of scenarios under new rules are outlined below:

Examples	Old rules	New rules
New discharge on property that discharges wastewater into a raised bed.	Permitted	Consent required
Primary treated wastewater discharged into trench constructed in category 5 soil.	Permitted	Consent required
New discharge on property located over the Ruataniwha Plains unconfined aquifer	Permitted	Consent required
Existing system installed since April 2000 that meets all other conditions of Rule 35	Consent required	Permitted
Primary treated wastewater discharged on property over 2500m ²	Permitted	Consent required
New discharge on property less than 1000m ² in area.	Permitted, subject to zoning	Consent required

What are key features of the new rules?

- Conditions will require consent for new discharges located over the Ruataniwha Plains unconfined aquifer.
- Conditions for new discharges will require all to be treated to at least an advanced primary standard.
- Many existing consented discharges will not need to replace those consents. These will be treated as 'lawfully established' systems and will be permitted activities, subject to full compliance with conditions.
- Existing conditions are clarified for discharges located in areas that experience high seasonal groundwater levels (within 600mm of ground level).
- Reference to 'land zoned for residential activity' is deleted, therefore no reliance is placed on district plan zoning.
- Clearer requirements for system design and installation which will be consistent with recently published Australia/NZ Standard 1547:2012.
- Clear requirements for the design of wastewater discharges that are located on slopes.
- Conditions will require consent for all new discharges that discharge wastewater into a raised bed.
- Conditions for new discharges will require consent for all properties of less than 1000 m², irrespective of zoning.
- Conditions for new discharges on properties larger than 1000 m² will require consent for all properties that fail to achieve a net site area to discharge volume ratio of at least 1.5 m² per litre per day (see examples in following table):

Net site area (m ²)	Maximum daily discharge volume (L/d)*	Ratio	Complies with new condition?
1011	1200 (3 bdrm, 200 L/p/d)	0.84	No
1600	1200 (as above)	1.3	No
2000	1200 (as above)	1.6	Yes
2000	1600 (4 bdrm, 200 L/p/d)	1.25	No
1000	400 (1 bdrm, 200 L/p/d)	2.5	Yes

* HBRC assesses household occupancy of 2 people per bedroom, so a 3 bedroom house is assessed as having an occupancy of 6 people.

How can I find out more about the new rules?

The Regional Council has further information about the new rules and associated information about selection, operation and maintenance of on-site wastewater systems. Visit www.hbrc.govt.nz (keyword: wastewater) or talk to a staff member from the consents team.

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