

Septic Tank Desludging Fact Sheet

What is the Septic Tank Desludge Program?

The Septic Tank Desludge Program is the periodical cleaning or desludging of all septic tanks connected to the Council's Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS). This is essential to prevent plumbing maintenance costs associated with blocked drains, both on your property and to Council's infrastructure.

Who pumps out my septic tank?

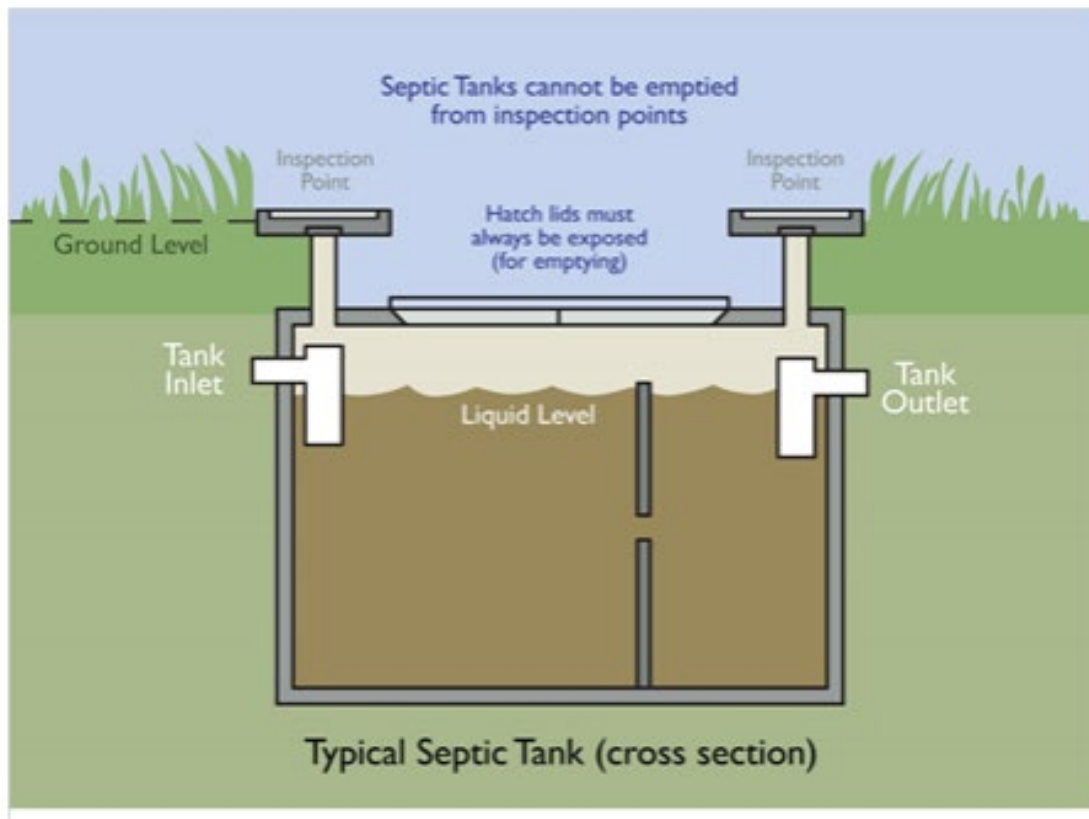
Council's contractor will pump out your septic tank.

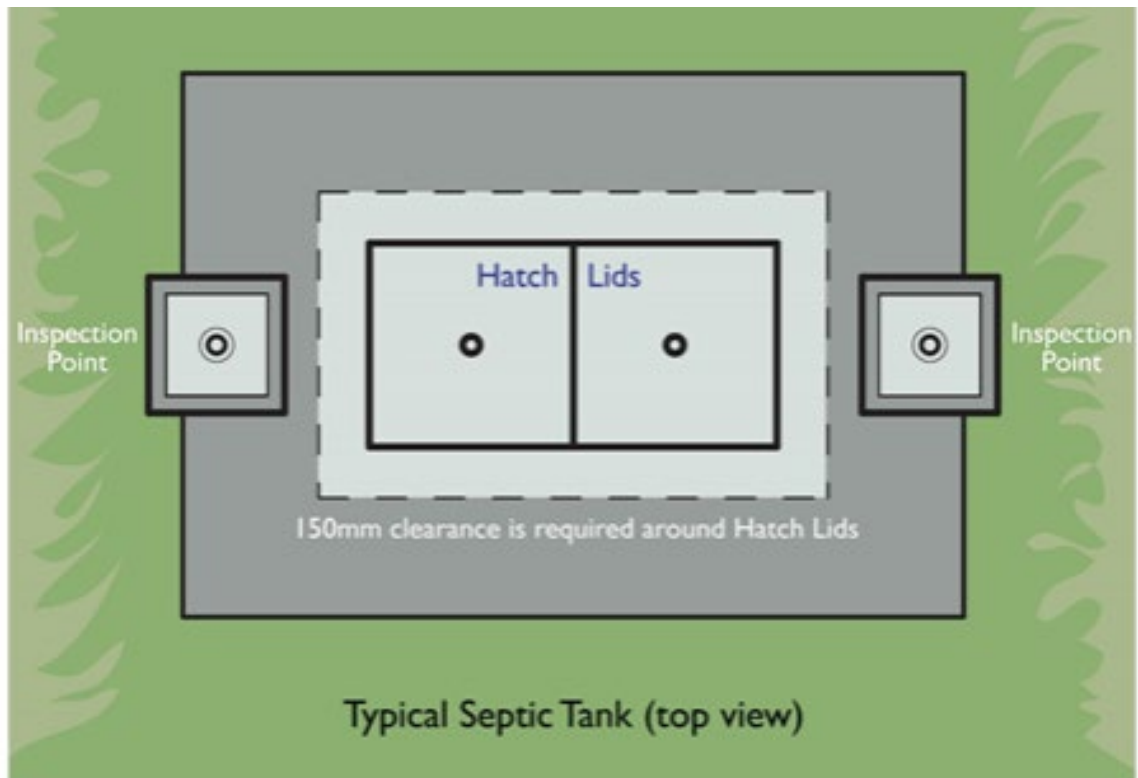
When does it happen?

Every four years. The cost of this service is incorporated into the annual effluent charge included on the rates notice. If the septic tank is not emptied as scheduled, the property owner may be required to engage a contractor at their own cost to empty the tank or repair any blocked drains between scheduled services.

How do I know when the contractor will pump out my septic tank?

You will receive a letter from the contractor advising when they will be in your area. The letter contains important information about what you need to do, please read this carefully.





What do I need to do?

Uncover your septic tank hatch lid. The contractor will need access to this to pump it out. Hatch lids are approximately 800mm x 600mm and will require a minimum clearance of 150mm from the edge (refer diagram). Do not remove the hatch lid.

What if I'm unable to expose the hatch lid?

You can arrange for this to be done at a cost. Please contact the contractor, contact information shall be contained within the letter.

Where tanks are substantially below ground level, property owners are encouraged to install an approved access shaft (riser) and top cover lid to assist in future pump outs.

What else do I need to know?

If the tank has an access shaft it is the contractor's responsibility to remove the top cover lid from the access shaft. Do not remove this lid prior to the service being provided.

Exposed septic tanks should be protected with high visibility bunting or similar.

During the process of pumping out your septic tank, the use of your water supply will be required.

Whilst the contractor will take all reasonable care, they will not be held responsible for any unavoidable damage caused through aged, previously damaged septic tanks or to the lids and access shafts.

How old is your septic tank?

Many properties in the township of Robe have a septic tank somewhere in the garden. Some of these will have shafts with lids on top, some will be at ground level. They may be covered with plants or mulch and hidden from sight.

Some of these tanks and lids have been in service for many years and they start to wear out, the concrete weakens and crumbles.

Properties that are serviced by a septic tank can expect to have minor to major issues reported due to their age over the coming years. Most of these tanks are either approaching or have exceeded their service life and will require repairs or replacement.

After your septic tank has been desludged, Council receives a service report from the contractor. The report outlines the size of the tank and condition of the septic tank including items that require your attention for example, if a riser is required to be installed, tree roots affecting the tank and/or septic tank lid is broken/cracked.

This information is passed on to Council's Environmental Health Officer to confirm the issues and advise the owners of their options. Please note – if a replacement to a septic tank is required or repairs are required, approval must first be obtained from Council.