

SECTION 5

HEALTH

5.2 Sewer Connection Policy

That where a septic tank system or leach drain serving a property within the Moora Sewerage Area is in the opinion of the Manager Development Services defective or unable to handle the sewage produced on the property the owner be required to connect to the sewer forthwith.

Introduction/Background

Wastewater in the Moora Township is managed, treated and disposed of by Shire of Moora (SOM), in accordance to legislation. The Moora sewerage system consists of a combination of old and new assets with some dating back to the 1970's. The Shire of Moora operates and maintains its system of Pumping Stations, gravity mains and pressure mains; sewerage collection ponds and Reuse scheme. The Shire OF Moora will ensure that its dealings with the public are open and transparent. It is therefore required that a policy must be designed to manage and protect these essential assets and to comply with best practise management guidelines to ensure a high level of service for Moora residents.

Connecting to the reticulated sewerage system can reduce environmental and health risks to the community as they create less diffuse pollution of soils, ground waters and surface waterways than on-site septic systems particularly as Moora Townsite has a history of being flood prone. This policy will outline Council's steps towards maintaining its sewerage system at optimal conditions in order to provide high standard services. It will also provide alternative options for accessing to our services, in order to satisfy the needs of the whole community of the Townsite of Moora.

Our commitment to service

The SOM has a duty to provide a sewerage service to the community and will provide its service in a manner, which is fair, courteous and timely – with a focus on consultation with our customers, respecting your rights, and meeting your reasonable expectations.

Service we provide

The SOM will use its best endeavors to provide a service to collect, treat and dispose of domestic sewage discharged from each customers' property to the SOM sewer system. In addition, the Shire of Moora shall provide other services on terms agreed upon between the customer and the SOM.

The areas of operation of the Shire of Moora sewer scheme are as follows:

- Lots serviced by reticulated sewer mains in the town site of Moora. The area of operation of the Shire of Moora is as indicated on Office of Water Regulation Plan Number OWR-OA-058/2 (B), as issued by the Economic Regulation Authority. The plan is available for inspection at the Office of the Economic Regulation Authority Level 6, 197 St Georges Terrace Perth and the Shire of Moora Administration Offices 34 Padbury Street Moora.

How to contact us

Account and General Enquiries (including application for connections)

Postal Address: PO Box 211, Moora WA 6510

Office Hours: 8.00am to 4.30pm

Telephone number: (08) 9651 0000

Facsimile number: (08) 9651 1722

Sewerage Maintenance Supervisor (08) 9651 0088 – To report a sewerage blockage.

Contact officer: Manager Development Services

Email: mds@moora.wa.gov.au

Faults and Emergency assistance

The Shire of Moora maintains a 24-hour emergency service for emergency events, such as an overflow from a sewer. The fault reporting and emergency customer service telephone number is (08) 9651 0088.

Note: Blockages and faults which occur inside the property line and before the connection point are the responsibility of the landowner/occupier of the property.

Purpose/Objectives/Contact Details & Methods of Payment

Shire of Moora's policy objectives are:

- To protect Public Health
- To guarantee that appropriate and reliable sewerage services are properly looked after, maintained and provided in order to protect the health and amenity of our shire residents.
- To provide the basic requirements for connections applicable to residential dwellings and subdivisions, as well as commercial and industrial buildings.

- To ensure that appropriate sewerage main connection and/or sewerage bacteriolytic disposal requirements as approved by the WA Health Department are put in place to all properties in the shire.

Your rights to industrial and commercial wastewater service

Industrial and commercial wastewater may be accepted for discharge to the SOM's wastewater system subject to compliance with the SOM requirements. An agreement with a customer for industrial and wastewater services to be provided by the SOM shall be documented in an industrial waste permit issued by the SOM.

Your rights in relation to sewage spills

If a sewer overflow occurs on your property due to failure of the Shire of Moora's sewer scheme, representatives of the SOM shall be on site as soon as possible and within two hours of being notified. Action shall be taken to restore the service, clean up the affected area and minimize any damage or inconvenience.

Your rights to consultation and information

The SOM is committed to involving its customers in issues relating to its programmes and services. Community involvement in the SOM's service planning and decision making processes will be sought through forums such as focus groups, customer surveys, and displays at local functions. The SOM will use local media bulletins to advise customers of any system change that may result in significant variation in its service levels.

The SOM will publish, and make available at its premises, information on matters relating to its wastewater services and on other aspects such as charging and complaints handling. Information regarding these matters can be obtained from the SOM's business office at 34 Padbury Street Moora.

The SOM's representatives will provide identification, their name and section when engaged in business discussions with customers.

Your rights to assistance, redress and compensation

If the SOM's activities have caused damage to your property or disruption to you, such as a sewer overflow, the SOM shall deal with the matter in a fair and business-like manner, whether or not a complaint is received. The SOM may rectify damage and, as necessary and reasonable, compensate you subject to any relevant Act.

Charges and accounts

Statements of account for outstanding charges are issued on a regular basis. In addition the SOM shall supply additional statements of account on request and a fee is charged for this service.

Utility service availability and other charges are made against the owner of the land to which services are available or supplied and are the responsibility of the property owner. A property owner is responsible for payment of the charges set by the SOM as applicable to the property.

An account shall be regarded as having been delivered when it is transmitted to a property owner at the address notified to the SOM by the property owner or the property owner's agent. It is the property owner's responsibility to notify the SOM of any change of address.

If an error is made in the charges which results in a customer paying less than the correct amount, the customer may be required to pay the correct amount upon request.

The SOM may charge interest on overdue accounts as prescribed by By-laws made under the Water Agencies (Charges) By-laws 1987. Also, if a customer's cheque is not honoured for any reason, the SOM may pass on any costs incurred.

The SOM can make special financial arrangements to assist customers experiencing hardship in the payment of their accounts (Refer Shire of Moora Financial Hardship Policy). Information on these options is available from the SOM's offices or by calling the telephone numbers shown on your account.

If an error is made resulting in a customer paying more than the correct amount, the excess amount shall be held in credit for a future charge, or refunded, at the direction of the customer.

The SOM has the discretion to make refunds, adjustments and waive or defer payments.

Connecting to our services

Applications for wastewater service connections should be made at the SOM's business office. These applications must be accompanied by the related building plans. Single applications for approval shall be processed on receipt at the SOM business office. Multiple applications shall be processed within 14 business days of receipt.

Where the SOM wastewater reticulation main is available to your land and has the capacity for the required service, the SOM shall, on application by you, approve connection to the wastewater system, under the terms and conditions set out in this Policy, the Operating License and the Water Services Act 2012 or other relevant Acts.

Where a junction to an available sewer does not exist, a junction may be provided by the SOM, by arrangement with the licenced plumber installing the property sewer. No fee applies where a service availability charge has been applied to a property, except for property subject to redevelopment.

If the SOM wastewater system is available to a property i.e. within 91 metres of that property, which produces or has capacity to produce wastewater, it is a requirement for the property owner to connect to the system.

Disconnection

If the wastewater service is no longer required by you, a disconnection from the SOM service may be approved provided that;

- The SOM is first notified of the intention, and
- A fee is paid to the SOM which shall arrange the disconnection, and
- The property has no further wastewater disposal requirement and
- The disconnection is carried out by a licensed plumber

In most circumstances, disconnection of a wastewater service does not terminate this Policy. The SOM is required under 'the Water Services Act 2012 and Operating License to levy a service availability charge to the owner of land (including vacant land) where wastewater services are available for connection. The Policy is void if there were no services available and no charges levied.

Enquiries, suggestions, complaints and disputes

The Shire of Moora values your enquiries and suggestions on ways it can improve its services. If you have an enquiry or suggestion you can telephone the Shire of Moora on 08 96510000 during business hours. You will receive prompt, courteous and helpful reply and will be told who is handling your enquiry.

Telephone calls to the emergency numbers shall be answered promptly and advice of action to be taken and timing given within one hour of your call. General written correspondence will be replied to as soon as possible within 10 business days. Over the counter and telephone enquiries will be responded to within 48 hours.

When you lodge a complaint, (either in writing or verbally) the SOM shall address the issue in a timely and efficient manner. A representative of the Utility shall respond in person within 5 business days of a complaint being lodged. Where this response advises the need for further assessment you shall receive a written reply within 10 business days.

If the matter has not been resolved to your satisfaction within 21 days, you may refer the matter to the Department of Water. The Department of Water will seek a detailed explanation of the nature of the complaint, the solutions or actions offered by the SOM and the reasons why these are not acceptable to you. The Department of Water will respond with its opinion on the matter and suggest a solution to the parties involved. Contact details for the Department of Water are as follows:

Department of Water
The Atrium 168 St Georges Terrace
PO Box K822, PERTH WA 6842
Tel: (08) 6364 7600 Fax: (08) 6364 7601
www.water.wa.gov.au

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may submit the matters to arbitration by Energy & Water Ombudsman Arbitrator operated by the Economic Regulation Authority. The Arbitrator's decision,

including award of costs, shall be binding on both parties and will preclude further action on the matter. You may elect to bypass the arbitration process and take legal action to resolve the matter.

Service we provide

Subject to the Water Services Act 2012 and the Water Agencies (Power) Act 1984 ('The Water Acts') the SOM shall provide a service for the removal, treatment and disposal of wastewater under the terms set out in this Policy and the Operating License. In certain circumstances, the Shire of Moora may supply water for purposes other than drinking (e.g.; treated effluent) in a manner agreed with the customer.

The SOM shall test and dispose of wastewater in an environmentally responsible manner. All wastewater treatment plants shall operate in accordance with the license conditions set by, and or agreements with, the Department of Environment and Conservation.

Occasionally some odours occur in the treatment plant and these may affect nearby residents. The SOM shall respond to complaints of odours by investigating the report and advising the customer of the outcome within one day.

The SOM will use its best endeavors to provide a service to collect, treat and dispose of domestic sewage discharged from each customers' property to the SOM sewer system. In addition, the Shire of Moora shall provide other services on terms agreed upon between the customer and the SOM.

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Contact officer: Manager Development Services

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Methods of Payment

Payments can be made by all normal methods of payment e.g. EFT, Cash, Direct Debit, Credit Card & B Point. Payments in advance will be accepted upon request. Accounts will in the event of hardship be redirected to address of choice.

Financial Hardship Policy

Shire of Moora has a financial hardship policy to facilitate owners having problems paying accounts. Please ask for information.

Complaints Policy

SOM has a Complaints Policy for dealing with complaints regarding sewerage. Policy is available for download on its web site www.moora.wa.gov.au

STATEMENT

Shire of Moora as the owner of the sewerage system is responsible for the condition of its gravity and pressure sewerage system and it has a duty to provide a sewerage service to the public of the Town Site that is economical, cost effective and at a price to the user that is not too onerous.

The public of the Town of Moora is entitled to have a sewerage service that is well maintained, operates free of obstructions and blockages and is reliable throughout the year. Moora Shire is developing projects to identify and address critical unsewered areas as well, proposed areas for developments, where access to the sewer main is currently difficult and unfeasible.

The Health Act 1911 Section 81.1, states that properties located within ninety one (91) metres to the Shire sewer main, are liable to pay connected sewer rates and can be forced to connect to the reticulated sewerage system. In order to diminish and eliminate any harm to public health, safety and the environment risks associated with sewerage connection as well as to comply with relevant legislation, Council therefore will:

- a) Monitor and maintain Shire of Moora sewerage system as well as undertake the treatment and disposal of waste water for the community.
- b) Undertake upgrades to sewerage system management assets, to ensure continuous improvement to the sewerage system. It is council's endeavour to achieve standards specified by legislation.
- c) Gradually and if viable serve areas that are currently not connected to its sewer system. Priority would be given to areas with public health or environmental risks as well as areas with future potential for expansion and development.
- d) Once approval for sewerage connection has been given, it is the property owner or developer's (applicant) responsibility to contact Moora Shire Council, prior to construction of the works to arrange for sewerage connection points to be established.
- e) Where physically feasible, all applications for connection will be required to meet Plumbing Code of Australia requirements and the requirements of this policy.

Our Powers

Entry to your property

The circumstances in which the SOM's representatives may enter your property to carry out investigations and/or work on the SOM wastewater system, are set out in the Health Act 1911, Water Service Licensing Act (1995) or other relevant Acts. Any such entry shall normally occur during business

hours, except in cases of emergency. For planned work within a property, the SOM or its representatives shall advise the occupier in advance. In cases of emergency, the occupier, if present, shall be informed of the repairs to be undertaken and the anticipated length of time for the work.

Rectifying defective work

If the Shire of Moora becomes aware of the presence of any defective or improper work forming part of your wastewater pipes and fittings which may impair the effective operation of the SOM's system, it may serve a notice requiring you to remedy any such defect or improper work within a specified time.

If the terms of the notice are not followed, the SOM may enter the customer's property to remedy the defective or improper work. This action, if taken, shall be in accordance with the relevant Acts and the full costs of any remedial work shall be charged to the customer.

Service interruptions

The Shire of Moora wastewater services are designed to be available 24 hours a day. However, the SOM may interrupt, postpone or limit its wastewater services to customers:

- If any part of works is damaged, for example, by bursting, blockages or breakdowns; or
- If it is necessary to inspect, maintain, repair or replace any part of works; or
- For connection of new works or services; or
- If an event occurs beyond the SOM's control, including acts by others, sabotage, flood, earthquake, power or water shortage or industrial action.

The SOM will endeavour to limit the length and occurrence of disruption of services. Except in emergencies, the SOM shall give notice to you of its intention to interrupt, postpone or limit the supply of services for the purpose of regular maintenance or works programs. Unless interruptions are limited to a few minutes, notification shall be given to domestic customers - at least 24 hours prior, and for commercial and industrial customers – at least 7 days prior or by agreement.

Maintenance

The SOM's wastewater services are provided from the point where the pipes serving your property connect to the SOM's wastewater reticulation main.

Wastewater reticulation mains (sewers) and associated fittings remain the property of the Shire of Moora whether or not they are located within private property. The location of these structures may be obtained from the SOM office. You are required to ensure that the SOM's pipeline and structures are reasonably accessible, are not interfered with, covered, built close to, built over, or damaged.

Prior to undertaking building or construction activity on land connected or capable of being connected, it is a requirement to gain the SOM's approval. In the first instance, you should contact the SOM office. Unauthorised property improvements that interfere with the Shire of Moora's assets may be required to be removed at your cost.

The SOM is responsible for the maintenance of sewer property connections where they are unable to be cleared or repaired from the inspection shaft – provided that the depth of the repair job is 2.5 metres or more, and/or the fault in the property connection is outside the property concerned.

You are responsible for all plumbing, pipes and fixtures on or serving your property to the point where pipe connect to the SOM's sewer property connection. Where the sewer property connection is at a depth of less than 2.5 metres and is situated within the property boundary, you are responsible for maintenance of the property sewer connection.

Discharge of Unauthorised substances

It is your responsibility to ensure that storm water (including roof runoff) and other unauthorised substances are not discharged into the SOM's sewers. Certain waste products are not suitable for disposal in the SOM's wastewater system because of their nature and ability to pollute. Some substances will damage the ability of the sewerage ponds to operate. Specialised procedures for disposal are required for substances such as:

- Cooking oil and grease – these should be placed in a container or wrapped and placed in the rubbish bin;
- Paint, paint thinners, dry cleaning fluids, engine oil, solvents, acids, alkalis, laboratory chemicals, kerosene, garden poisons, polishes or cleaning products – such substances should be recycled through the Industrial Waste Exchange (the Office of Waste Management, Department of Environment) or be deposited at a local council collection point for these materials; and
- Products like disposable nappies, panty hose, sanitary napkins, tampons, cotton buds, syringes, toilet deodorant packs and razors – these should be wrapped and placed in the rubbish bin.

Liability

The Shire of Moora is liable for any loss or damage that you may suffer:

- As a result of a breach of this Charter by the Shire of Moora, its servants or agents; and
- As the result of a negligent act or omission by the SOM, its servants or agents;
- As a result of the failure to meet standards prescribed by its Operating License or Water Services Regulations 2013.

POLICY

General

This following policy requires that all developments that have access to reticulated sewer be connected. Based on the premise above, all connections to Council's reticulated system will be approved and provided, subject to the following conditions:

- I. Connections to the sewerage system shall be in accordance with the requirements of:-
 - Plumbing Code of Australia 2012
 - Section 81.1 of the Health Act 1911 which states - Subject to the express provisions of section 72, when there exists in any district any sewer (whether constructed by or under the control of the local government or not) ready for use and suitable for the removal of sewage on the water-carriage system, then the local government may, by notice in writing, require the owner of any house or land situated in the district within 91 m of the sewer, and capable, in the opinion of the local government, of being drained into such sewer, to provide for the removal of sewage from such house or land, and for that purpose to construct and provide, within a time specified in the notice, such drains and fittings as the authority having control of such sewer shall deem necessary, and to connect such drains with the sewer.

- All applications: residential, commercial and industrial properties, for connections to, and extensions to the sewer mains, shall be dealt with by Council's Department of Development Services' authorised personnel.
- A sewerage main connection form is completed and signed by both parties and the appropriate payment is made in accordance with Council's fees and charges.
- No connection to Council's sewerage system is to be made until the house drainage is completed and sealed to ensure that there is no ingress of waste and/or storm water.
- Council require one sewer connection to each property.
- All new developments, within areas designated for future extension to sewer or close to such areas, shall be connected to sewer unless it can be shown that it is impractical or economically unfeasible to do so. Such developments shall only be allowed to proceed without connection to sewer when it can be clearly demonstrated that:
 - a) An alternative can be suitably provided (PSS, Septic tanks) at the cost of developer.
 - b) Council may accept the alternative proposal, only if the developer has the resources to properly manage such an installation.
 - c) The developer enters into an agreement (which is necessary on any subsequent owners) that the facility must be converted to full sewer service, when this becomes available and all of the appropriate contributions made.

Responsibilities

The property owner will be responsible for ensuring that:

- a) No trade waste enters Council's sewer system, without Council's approval (refer to the *Discharge of Liquid Trade Waste Policy*).
- b) Stormwater does not enter Council's sewer system.
- c) Seepage and subsoil water does not enter Council's system.
- d) The sewer main connection as well as appropriate pipe work and fittings are adequately protected.
- e) The inspection opening (IO) is readily accessible at all times and covered by a commercially available screw cap fitted proud of the ground level.
- f) Council will recover from the property owners any costs that Council incurs as a result of the following:
 - i) The property owner damaging any pipe work owned by Council.
 - ii) Council having to locate IOs that are not readily accessible.
 - iii) Council having to clear above ground obstructions located above a sewer connection point on private property.
 - iv) Council having to clear its sewerage system as a result of debris cleared from a property owners blocked pipeline and that debris being the result of damage from tree roots or other causes emanating from the property. The property owner will be required to adjust their own pipework at their own cost.

Blockages

- Where a private line has been cut into the Shire of Moora gravity main or Pressure main, any pipes and fittings on the owner's side of the cut in point of the Moora Shire Council sewer connection point including the Boundary Trap (BT) and the Inspection Opening (IO) are the responsibility of the property owner. This means any repairs, replacement or maintenance costs associated with these pipes and fittings are the responsibility of the property owner.

- Council will not be responsible to clear blockages in connections between the main and property boundaries.
- Residents are required to engage a private plumber to clear blockages on the property side of the connection point into Shire Gravity Sewer line.
- Where a Council tree is discovered or suspected to be the cause of a blockage, or is in such proximity as to be the possible cause of a blockage, the property owner shall refer the matter to Council.
- Shire of Moora will not accept automatic liability for either sewer pipeline clearing or pipeline replacement, and will investigate any claims that roots from trees that belong to Council may be blocking a line.

On Site Septic tanks

Council will only consider applications for the use of an appropriate on-site Septic Tank in areas where access to gravity reticulation main is not feasible.

Pressure Sewerage Systems (PSS)

Council will only consider applications for the use of an appropriate PSS in areas where access to the gravity reticulation main is not feasible.

Sewer Main Availability

Once sewerage service lines become available all existing 'Approval to Operate' on-site sewerage management systems have to be withdrawn from properties and disposed of as required by legislation.

If a property owner fails to make a commitment to connect to Moora's sewerage system the following forms of action may be taken by Council:

- a) A notice may be issued under the Health Act, requiring the owner of the property to connect to the sewer.
- b) An order, notice may be issued under the Health Act 1911, requiring the property owner to connect to Council's sewer main.

RELATED LEGISLATION

Health Act 1911

Draft Country Sewerage Policy

Water Services Act 2012

Environmental Protection Act 1986

Plumbing Code of Australia 2012

Local Government Act 1995.

SEWERAGE CONNECTION CONDITIONS

- All applicable fees and charges for the connection works shall be paid prior to application processing, or commencement of any works.
- The owner or the owner's agent (plumber) shall provide a minimum of five (5) working days notice of intention to commence sewer construction / alteration works. Major projects or complicated connections will require additional time.
- Connection is not permitted until after the completion of all underfloor / underground sewer drains.
- The plumber shall ensure that there is no damage to Shire of Moora's connection point and / or sewer, and that approved backfill is used and compacted within 150mm of the pipework.
- An inspection shaft shall be provided in accordance with Shire of Moora's standard plan. The inspection shall terminate at ground level and shall be finished with approved cover.
- Where a new point of connection is requested / required, Shire of Moora's operations will complete the connection to the sewer main.

Proposed Plans are required for;

- 1) Single Residential & Multiple residential occupancies (units etc.). A detailed plan of plumbing installations showing location of pipes, inspection openings etc.
- 2) Commercial / Industrial – A clear site plan of the proposed works to scale is required.
- 3) All operations are carried out in accordance with Australian Standards Plumbing Code.

Plans should include:

- 1) measurements and ties
- 2) Inspection openings and shafts
- 3) Underfloor drains
- 4) Location of existing sewer mains
- 5) Location of Man holes
- 6) Overflow relief gullies
- 7) North point & road names
- 8) Outline of block and buildings.

SEWERAGE CONNECTION APPLICATION

PROPERTY DETAILS

Street No: _____ Lot No: _____ Street: _____ Town _____
 Assess No: _____ Section _____

PROPOSED WORK : (Initial sewer plan required to be lodged for commercial & multi-units) Please tick all applicable boxes

Residential (Single) ☐ Residential (multi-unit) ☐
 Commercial / Industrial * ☐ Commercial / Industrial * (multiple occupancy) ☐
 Detail Type of Business (i.e. hairdresser motel etc.) _____

Type of Work (Please tick applicable) New Connection ☐

PROPERTY OWNER DETAILS

Name _____

Postal Address _____

Ph: _____ Mb: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

I hereby make an application to the Shire of Moora for consent to connect / alter/ disconnect on site sewerage plumbing at the property described above.

Signature of Owner (or Agent) _____ Date ____/____/____

PLUMBER DETAILS

Name: _____ License No: _____

Business Name: _____ Ph: _____ Fax: _____

Postal: _____ Email: _____

FEES and CHARGES

Wastewater / Drainage Headwork's Contribution Charges (no GST)	\$1,954.00
Connection Fee (no GST)	\$TBA

CONSENT: *Consent is given to the Owner for the undertaking of the work described above.*

Name of Authorised Officer _____ Date ____/____/____

Signature: _____

COMMENTS:

Completed Forms can be emailed to: mds@moora.wa.gov.au or projects@moora.wa.gov.au