

Advisory Note 5 – February 2018

Servicing of Single Domestic Secondary Treatment Sewage Management Facilities (SMF)

1. Application and Implementation

New servicing conditions of Accreditation will be applied to on-site single domestic secondary treatment systems which treat sewage or greywater when these systems are accredited under Australian Standards AS1546.3:2017 and AS1546.4:2016 respectively. The servicing condition will not be applied retrospectively to existing Accreditations.

The new servicing conditions are as a result of complaints received about current inadequacies of servicing and reporting of servicing. The new servicing conditions seek to apply a uniform approach to all service agents whether independent or employed by a manufacturer. It is intended that all systems be serviced and maintained according to their specifications and the manufacturer's service manual during their serviceable life.

Also the IPART "Review of reporting and compliance burdens on Local Government" has recommended that a standard "service report form" be used by all service agents to inform local councils of servicing.

2. Local Council Role and Legal Context

Clause 45 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* requires that conditions of accreditation must be complied with as a condition of "approval to operate a system of sewage management". Also, the local council should maintain a register of all service agents operating in its area.

3. Servicing Requirements

3.1 Owner / Occupier

The Accreditation conditions will require that the owner / occupier of the premises where the system is installed and operated is always subjected to a minimum 12 month service contract or agreement with the manufacturer's employed service agent or a service agent authorised by the manufacturer.

The owner/occupier of premises where a SMF is installed:

- Shall not service their own system unless they are an authorised service agent.
- Shall ensure that the system is serviced at regular specified intervals.
- Should check with the manufacturer to ensure that any independent service agent is authorised by the manufacturer.

3.2 Attributes of Service Agent

The service agent engaged by the owner / occupier must:

- Have completed a course on servicing and maintenance of system; and have some supervised servicing experience, or extensive un-supervised experience.
- Not perform electrical work or enter confined spaces unless qualified to do so.
- Be either employed or authorised by the manufacturer.
- Must service the system in accordance with the manufacturer's service requirements specified in its service manual. A completed manufacturer's service report shall be submitted to the owner / occupier.
- When maintaining or servicing a system, install replacement parts at least to the minimum specification.
- Register their name and credentials with the local council as a service agent who is employed or authorised by the manufacturer to service SMF in their area.
- The service agent must submit a completed NSW Health standardised "Local Council Service Report" for the serviced systems to the local council, and a copy to the owner / occupier of the premises if requested.
- The service agent shall report to the local council instances where the owner / occupier does not accept recommended remedial actions.

3.3 Manufacturer

The manufacturer may require the service agent to complete an orientation or training session to become authorised.

The manufacturer should not unfairly withhold orientation opportunities to an independent service agent. In remote areas, with multiple system brands, which might be served by only one service agent, the service agent may need to make arrangements with the manufacturer to ensure that backup information and resources are available instead of face to face training or orientation to enable authorisation. Individual training with each manufacturer may not be viable.

The manufacturer must place the specifications, drawings, service manuals and service forms of the accredited system on its web site. Commercial-in-confidence documents may be provided directly to the service agent without uploading to the web site.

It was not considered necessary that service agents be qualified plumbers and drainers.

4. Local Council STS Service Report

Local councils need to be aware that the SMF has been serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements, that the SMF is

operating well and that it produces good quality effluent, without nuisance or odours. The local council needs to also be informed when the SMF requires de-sludging, that the alarms work correctly and that the related land application system is performing well. Importantly local councils also need to know if the owner / occupier does not authorise reasonable repairs. The "Local Council Service Report" can be found attached.

5. Consumer Guarantees

Under Australian consumer law, products and services are protected with automatic guarantees that the product or service will work and do what was sought. Service agents should be aware that their products and services must comply with consumer guarantee requirements. Further information is available at:

<https://www.accc.gov.au/consumers/consumer-rights-guarantees/consumer-guarantees> ; and

http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/ftw/Consumers/Consumer_guarantees_warranties_and_refunds/Consumer_guarantees.page ; and

http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/ftw/Consumers/Consumer_guarantees_warranties_and_refunds/Repairs_refunds_replacements.page

Local Council STS (DGTS) Service Report: (Version 5: August 2017)		
Owner's Name:		Local Council:
Installation Address:		
System Brand & Model:	<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial
Date of this service: / /	Date of last Service: / /	Next service due: / /
Has the STS/DGTS been serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's / supplier's requirements and using the service sheet? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If "No" why?		
STS/DGTS functioning correctly? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If "No" why?		
According to sludge-judge or other methodology is de-sludging needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If "Yes" what action is recommended?		
Offensive odours? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If "Yes" what action is recommended?		
Alarms tested and functional? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If not "functional" what action is recommended?		
Final Effluent Quality Tested? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Disinfected? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Chlorine tablets remaining? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Quality? <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory On what evidence is this judgement made? If "Unsatisfactory" what action was recommended?		
Land Application Area Surface ponding? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Run off? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Excess plant growth? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Effluent leaving premises? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No High risk areas contaminated? * <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No * Patio, play areas, BBQ, etc Operating satisfactorily? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If "Not operating satisfactorily" what action was recommended?		
Overall Condition of STS? <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor Comments / Action Recommended / Repairs Needed / Repairs Performed:		
Has the owner / occupier taken recommended actions? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Service Agent:		Contact Details:
Signature:		Date:

Source: Adapted from "Checklist 4.2: Operational AWTS inspection report for use by service providers and Council inspectors" in *Designing and Installing On-Site Wastewater Systems*, Sydney Catchment Authority, May 2012