



# **PRESSURE SEWER SYSTEMS POLICY**

<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Prepared By</b>	<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Adopted Date Resolution No.</b>
1	Engineering & Infrastructure Services	Manager Utilities	August 2029	13 August 2025 2025/455

## 1. PURPOSE

Narromine Shire Council manages and operates sewerage services in accordance with State and Federal legislation. This policy sets out Council's approach to pressure sewer systems and defines responsibilities for the design, installation, ownership, and maintenance of these systems. It complements relevant legislation, Australian standards, industry codes, and best practice guidelines.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT AND PROVISIONS

Council is committed to providing a safe, reliable, and cost-effective sewerage system that supports sustainable development across the Shire. Pressure sewer systems are considered a viable alternative to gravity systems in areas where gravity-based infrastructure is technically or financially unfeasible.

This policy ensures that pressure sewer systems are delivered in a consistent, fair, and practical manner and that Council's obligations under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* and NSW Water and Sewer Best Practice Guidelines are upheld.

## 3. POLICY AIMS

The aim of this policy is to:

- Provide clear guidance on when and how pressure sewer systems may be used as an alternative to gravity sewerage.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of property owners and Council throughout the design, installation, and operation phases.
- Ensure a consistent, fair, and efficient framework for assessing applications and managing pressure sewer connections across the Shire.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

### Boundary Kit

The collection of infrastructure at or near the property boundary that connects the property's pressure sewer system to Council's main sewer network. It generally includes a valve pit, isolation valve, and associated control devices.

### Control Panel

An electrical device that monitors and controls the operation of the pump unit. It includes visual and audible alarms, status indicators, and manual override functions to notify the property owner of faults or system issues. The control panel is hardwired into the property's electrical system and must remain accessible at all times.

### Pressure Sewer System

A type of sewer system that uses small, electrically powered pump units located on individual properties to convey wastewater through small-diameter pipes to the Council's main sewer. It is typically used in areas where gravity sewer systems are impractical due to topography, depth, or cost.

### Pump Unit

A below-ground vessel that collects sewage from the property and contains a grinder pump that macerates the solids and pumps the sewage through the pressure pipe to the sewer main.

## 5. IMPLEMENTATION

### 5.1 Connection Assessment Process

- Council's Utilities Department will assess all sewer connection applications on a case-by-case basis.
- Gravity sewer connections will be prioritised where technically and financially feasible.
- If gravity sewer is not suitable, a pressure sewer system may be approved.
- Council will:
  - Recommend the appropriate connection type;
  - Provide a quote for supply of equipment;
  - Review and approve the final installation prior to commissioning.

### 5.2 Ownership and Responsibilities

Council Responsibilities:

- Own and maintain the pump unit, tank, control panel, and associated pressure sewer assets once installed and approved.
- Attend call-outs and replace faulty equipment at no cost to the property owner, except in cases of wilful damage or neglect.
- Issue a Homeowner Guide outlining system use, care instructions, and maintenance responsibilities.
- Maintain a stock of spare equipment for emergency repairs.

Owner Responsibilities

Property owners are responsible for :

- Arranging and funding the supply and installation of the pressure sewer unit, including all electrical and drainage works from the tank to the boundary kit.
- Controlling what materials enter the sewer system; only wastewater should be discharged. Foreign objects such as wet wipes, rags, bricks, small toys, or other solids must not be flushed or placed down the drain as they can cause blockages and pump failures.
- Maintaining clear and safe access to the pump unit at all times, including keeping the lid and ventilation openings unobstructed.
- Responding promptly to any alarms from the system. Owners should follow the instructions in the Homeowner Guide and if an alarm persists for more than one hour, notify Council immediately on 02 6889 9999.
- Understanding that failure to maintain the unit properly or wilful damage may result in repair costs being charged to the owner.
- Ensuring pressure sewer system installations fully comply with the Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) Pressure Sewerage Code and relevant Australian standards to ensure safety, reliability and consistency.

### 5.3 Equipment Standardisation

- All pressure sewer systems installed under Council's jurisdiction must use the same make and model to ensure system balance and facilitate efficient maintenance.
- To ensure consistency, all pressure sewer units will be supplied by Council (purchased by the property owner).

## 5.4 Exceptional Cases and Variations

Any requests for exceptions or variations to this policy must be submitted in writing and will be considered by the General Manager (or their delegate) on a case-by-case basis, with decisions documented accordingly.

## 5.5 Charges and Fees

- The capital cost of the pressure sewer unit and installation is to be borne by the property owner.
- Properties connected to the pressure sewer system are subject to Council's annual sewer access charge, as outlined in the adopted Fees and Charges schedule. This charge applies equally to both gravity and pressure sewer connections, with no variation in cost between the two systems.
- Headworks charges (developer servicing fees) will continue to apply to all new connections, regardless of system type.
- Council will absorb ongoing maintenance costs within its operational budget, consistent with other sewer infrastructure.

## 6. DOCUMENTATION AND SUPPORT

- A Pressure Sewer Homeowner Guide will be provided by Council to every property owner at the time of equipment supply.
- Council's Utilities Department will be available to assist with technical queries, connection requests, and service issues.

## 7. LEGISLATIVE OBLIGATIONS AND/OR RELEVANT STANDARDS

This policy has been developed to be consistent with the following legislative requirements:

- National Water Quality Management Strategy  
<https://www.waterquality.gov.au/>
- Water Management Act, 2000  
<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2000-092>
- Local Government Act, 1993  
<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1993-030>
- NSW Local Government (General) Regulation 2021  
<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2021-0460>
- Australian Drinking Water Guidelines  
<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-drinking-water-guidelines>
- NSW Public Health Act 2010 No 127  
<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2010-127>
- NSW Public Health Regulation 2012  
<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2012-0311>
- NSW Water Management (General) Regulation 2018  
<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/sl-2018-0480>
- NSW Protection of Environment Operations Act 1997  
<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1997-156>
- NSW Essential Services Act 1988  
<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1988-041>
- SW DPE-Water Best Practice Management of Water and Sewage Services  
<https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/water-utilities/best-practice-mgmt>