

8. NIGHT SOIL COLLECTION AND SEPTIC TANKS

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The purpose of this report is to respond to a Committee request in February 2001 for a report on night soil collection and septic tanks.

SEPTIC TANK SITUATION

Septic tanks are the usual method of wastewater disposal in the rural area. Within the Christchurch City Council rural area there is estimated to be approximately 3,500 septic tanks. Property owners are responsible for the operation and maintenance of their septic tanks.

Within the urban zoned area, following the sewerage of Brooklands, Spencerville and Taylors Mistake some ten years ago, there are virtually no septic tanks remaining in operation.

In recent years, the Council has extended sewer reticulation into the surrounding Rural zone to a number of small existing areas of close development, where septic tank effluent disposal was causing concern. These areas include:

- Horotane and Butts Valley
- Residential strip development on Whincops Road
- Residential strip development at the top end of Avonhead Road
- A housing cluster at the top end of Gardiners Road
- The top of Moncks Spur Road
- Riverlea Estates (cost shared with Residents Association)
- Corgwyn Avenue area
- A cluster of houses at Watsons/Waimakariri Road
- A residential strip on Quaifes Road near Sabys
- A residential strip on Hills Road above QEII drive (just completed).

Remaining areas on the Rural Reticulation programme are:

- Western Stewarts Gully (this financial year, cost shared with Residents Association)
- Islington – a strip development of 90 dwellings and businesses on Main South Road between Templeton and Christchurch (this and next financial year)
- A residential strip on McSaveney's Road near Hills Road (budgeted 2002/03)
- Chaney's (in conjunction with future development, currently budgeted 2004/05 & 2005/06)

NIGHT SOIL COLLECTION SITUATION

Night soil collection (a weekly collection of receptacles from pan closets) still occurs for 35 properties in the rural area. These properties are all situated north of the city, and do not have septic tanks, generally because on-site effluent disposal is not viable.

The Council's Rural Reticulation programme has seen 69 properties drop off the night soil collection list since the current contract was first let to cover 104 properties in 1993. Of the 35 now remaining, 23 are in Western Stewarts Gully and should drop off the list in the next year or two. Of the 12 that will then remain, 2 or 3 now have a sewer close enough to pump to, but at considerable cost. Of the rest, half are large properties that could possibly have modern on-site disposal systems, but again at considerable cost to the property owner. Portable toilets are a possible alternative for the few remaining properties on the list in future.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received.