



LAND CAPABILITY ASSESSMENTS

ONSITE DOMESTIC WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT

If you plan to install a septic system you may need to first provide a Land Capability Assessment to Council.

What is a Land Capability Assessment?

A Land Capability Assessment (LCA) is a report you may need to submit to Council if you plan to use a septic system (on-site wastewater management system) to treat wastewater from a residential development. The LCA will:

- Show Council if your site is capable of sustainably managing your household's wastewater within allotment boundaries; and
- Identify a management program for you to put in place to minimise the health and environmental impacts of on-site wastewater management.

Why do you need one?

LCAs provide information that allows council to understand the key site and soil features of your land, and any constraints that the land has for on-site wastewater management. This helps Council determine if an appropriate and practical management program has been recommended for your site. A satisfactory LCA is the key to Council approving your application, though completion of an LCA does not necessarily ensure that a development can proceed.

What must the LCA contain?

The LCA must contain:

- General information about the site, such as the area and title details, local government area, nature of the development and anticipated wastewater load;
- A scaled site plan showing, as a minimum, contours, boundaries, location of watercourses, location of any buildings, the wastewater treatment system, and the area available for the application of the treated effluent;
- A description of the nature of the key site and soil features;
- A table that lists these features and gives a rating for each in terms of the degree to which the characteristic could limit the site for on-site wastewater management. The worst rating for an individual feature then determines the overall site rating;
- This overall rating provides the land capability of the site and allows the person preparing the report to recommend a management program, which includes the type of wastewater system that could be used, and method of applying the treated effluent to the land; and
- Recommendations for land application of the treated effluent should be based on a calculation of the water balance, which takes into account the climate of the area (amount of rainfall) and the expected amount of wastewater to be generated by the household.

Who should carry out the LCA?

The preparation of a LCA requires a range of skills and should be produced to a high standard to meet the requirements of Council. Your LCA should be prepared by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional in the environment, geotechnical, soil science and/or wastewater consulting field. It is most important that the professional completing the LCA talks to both Council and you or your developer to ascertain in detail what is required for your proposed development.

Council have a list of consultants that prepare LCAs in the Central Goldfields area or you may check the yellow pages for listings under *Soil Testing and Investigations*.

Who do you talk to if you have questions about your LCA?

The best place to get information about LCAs is from Council. We can help you with any particular issues in on-site wastewater management in your area and give you more detail on Council's particular requirements for your LCA. Contact Council's Environmental Health Officer on 54610647. Further information can also be obtained from the EPA Victoria website at www.epa.vic.gov.au