

## Acceptance guideline 23: Nightsoil (septage, septic tank and pan waste) Transporters

### Overview

The purpose of this acceptance guideline is to outline under what circumstances Icon Water will permit the discharge of liquid waste into the sewerage network.

Under section 35 of the *Utilities (Technical Regulation) Act 2014*, it is an offence to discharge into the water or sewerage network any substance that is likely to interfere with the network, or form compounds that would be likely to interfere, unless the consent of the utility is obtained. Significant fines, imprisonment or both may result from an offence. Discharges entering a sewer that are in breach of the conditions set out in this guideline will probably constitute a breach of section 35 of the *Utilities (Technical Regulation) Act 2014* and may lead to prosecution of the person discharging the waste, or allowing the waste to be discharged.

#### What is Nightsoil?

Human excreta deposited in a bucket or other receptacle for manual removal and or waste of either domestic household origin or from temporary toilets. This may include waste from septic tanks, but specifically excludes waste from any industrial or trade process.

This guideline contains specific information on waste types and discharge requirements. The requirements of this guideline are in addition to the requirements specified in Trade waste acceptance guideline 1: General acceptance criteria for liquid waste. This guideline does not apply to abattoirs or meat/chicken processing and food manufacturers who are subject to separate specific discharge requirements.

### Nightsoil Acceptance

Nightsoil comprises septage, septic tank and pan waste that may be accepted into the Icon Water's sewerage system with the agreement/approval of Icon Water's Trade Waste Section.

These wastes include:

- septic – effluent and septage
- chemical toilet waste
- pan content/night soil
- ship-to-shore pump-out from boat/marinas

The definition of “pan” is identified as “any moveable receptacle kept in a closet and used for the reception of human waste”.

Septic tank waste may include septic tank effluent and/or septage.

The waste is anaerobic in nature and hence the presence of sulphides can be expected. Septic tank effluent is usually of similar strength to domestic waste, but has a higher concentration of ammonia. Septic tank effluent is often managed via on-site systems such as soil absorption, evapotranspiration beds or trenches. Where on-site management is not provided, the septic tank effluent must be pumped out on a regular basis.

**Chemical toilet waste;** where formaldehyde based compounds are used in chemical toilets, the concentration of formaldehyde in the sewage entering the sewage treatment works should not exceed a value of 30 mg/L. Such products adversely affect the sewage treatment process and the environment.

Additives most frequently used are:

- Formaldehyde
- Gluteraldehyde.

It is understood that the use of formaldehyde is slowly being phased out, but some activities that previously generated this type of waste (and may still do) are:

- ship-to-shore pump-outs
- caravans/motorhomes
- portable chemical toilets.

Portable chemical toilet wastes are generated from activities associated with the collection and disposal of wastes from portable toilets, such as from building sites. The containers may be replaced individually or pumped out by a tanker and emptied when full at another location

Portable toilet waste may present a significant problem when large volumes of chemical toilet waste need to be disposed of during special public events, for example festivals, shows etc. Local organisers or the contracted Transporter should advise Icon Water’s Trade Waste Section of such proposed events well in advance to allow sufficient time to assess a proposal for acceptance of this waste.

In accordance with this Guideline, Nightsoil (septage, septic tank and pan wastes) is now defined as trade waste.

## **Nightsoil discharge**

The emptying of tankers with Nightsoil Septage, Septic Tank, and Pan Waste into manholes or sewage pumping stations is not permitted, regardless of dilution or chemical pre-treatment, given the impact this material can have on the sewerage system. This waste may only be accepted at a designated point in Icon Water’s sewerage reticulation system or water quality control centres.

To ensure the integrity of the waste, the discharge of the nightsoil may be requested to be made in the presence of an Icon Water Trade Waste Officer.

The Transporter must maintain an up to date and accurate written register (“Discharge Register”) of each use of the Nightsoil Discharge Facility, including but not limited to the following:

- (a) the registration number of the transporting vehicle
- (b) full name of the vehicle driver
- (c) the premises or sites from which the nightsoil was transported
- (e) whether the nightsoil was of domestic household origin or from temporary toilets

- (f) an estimate of the amount of nightsoil from each source
- (g) date and time of day of discharge.

### **Nightsoil non-acceptance**

The Transporter will not discharge any substance, material or waste into the Nightsoil Discharge Facility:

- (a) that is not Nightsoil
- (b) that has been collected from a customer or property not located in the Australian Capital Territory
- (c) until a Source Agreement has been completed and properly executed
- (d) until a sample is deposited in the receptacle in accordance with their Agreement
- (e) that the Transporter is aware, or should be reasonably aware, may present a risk
- (f) contrary to the direction of Icon Water or any government authority.

### **Grease trap waste is not permitted to be discharged into the sewerage system**

Nightsoil Septage, Septic Tank, and Pan Waste tank effluent will not be mixed with oil separator or grease trap pump out, e.g. dedicated tankers will be used for each type of waste. If this is impractical for a small operation, a road tanker is required to be washed after pumping out grease trap or other waste and disposing of such waste at the appropriate facility. A standard operating procedure must be in place to prevent this mixing with nightsoil waste and a certified copy submitted to Icon Water's Trade Waste Section for Approval.

Icon Water may take samples of this waste periodically and test. The results of these tests may indicate whether grease trap pump-out or trade waste sludge has been discharged with the nightsoil effluent.

### **Information Icon Water requires for a Nightsoil Discharger Agreement**

#### **Information the applicant needs to supply**

Icon Water's Application for Non-Domestic Discharge to Sewer sets out the minimum information requirements that should be provided by the applicant. The applicant should provide all the information requested on the application form.

The following information should be provided to facilitate the assessment process:

- Name, address and telephone number of business/industry responsible for the discharge of the proposed waste to the sewerage system
- Name and telephone number of contact person for business/industry
- Type of waste collected
- Identification of the pump out service provider including the; the registration numbers of the transporting vehicles, full name of all vehicle drivers
- Volume of waste for acceptance into the sewerage system (daily, weekly, annual)
- Frequency of discharge
- Proposed rate of discharge
- The use of odour inhibiting or other chemicals and their dosage rates
- Proposed method of discharge
- Proposed method of flow measurement where required

- Proposed method of waste volume measurement (this must include technical information/specification/drawings on tanker capacity and flow meter if used)
  - A certified copy of ACT EPA licence/permit to cart waste within the ACT
  - Any additional information requested by the Icon Water.
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## **Further information**

Additional information about the discharge of liquid waste into Icon Water's sewerage network is available at [iconwater.com.au/tradewaste](http://iconwater.com.au/tradewaste) or by contacting us on **02 6248 3111** or via email on [talktous@iconwater.com.au](mailto:talktous@iconwater.com.au).