



Circular Details	Circular No 23-07 / 27 June 2023 / A858665
Previous Circular	N/A
Who should read this	General Managers / Environmental Health Officers / Council Water Utilities
Contact	Policy Team / (02) 4428 4100 / olg@olg.nsw.gov.au
Action required	Request for feedback

Draft update of the Environment and Health Protection Guidelines: Onsite Sewage Management for Single Households (Silver Book)

What's new or changing

- The Silver Book is undergoing a review and update to bring it in line with modern expectations, technological advancements, the latest scientific literature and emerging trends in land use.
- The Office of Local Government (OLG) is now seeking feedback on a draft update.

What this will mean for your council

- Councils regulate the installation and operation of Onsite Wastewater Management (OWM) systems and rely heavily on the guidance provided in the Silver Book.
- An updated Silver Book will provide councils with increased confidence that their approval processes achieve desired public health and environmental outcomes.
- The aim of the review is to increase the consistency by which councils across the state carry out their OWM responsibilities and improve clarity around councils' responsibilities.
- Feedback received will be carefully considered and will help inform any required changes prior to release of a final version later this year.

Key points

- The Silver Book remains the primary reference document for OWM in NSW. It is also referenced by other industry participants, including wastewater consultants, environmental engineers, suppliers, installers and service technicians.
- Sector opinion of the required scope of the draft update was gauged through a survey carried out in late June 2022. The survey highlighted the sector's pressing concerns and key priorities. This information and feedback helped shape the development of this draft update.
- The Silver Book was developed under the guidance and direction of OLG, NSW Health, the Department of Planning and Environment – Water (Town Water Risk Reduction Program) and WaterNSW.

- The update includes a new model OWM strategy that councils may wish to refer to and/or adapt when next reviewing their strategies. It is based on a desktop review of several councils' current strategies to come up with a best practice approach.
- The regular review and updating of strategies is encouraged to ensure they remain relevant and useful tools for operational management of new and existing OWM systems.

Where to go for further information

- A copy of the draft update is available on the OLG website at www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/council-infrastructure/services-to-communities/on-site-sewage-management.
- The consultation period closes on **21 July 2023**.
- Councils are requested to submit their feedback using the template available at the above link.
- For further information, contact OLG's Policy Team on (02) 4428 4100.

Handwritten signature of Ashley Ashbury in black ink, appearing as 'a.w. ash' with a stylized flourish.

Ashley Ashbury
A/Deputy Secretary, Local Government