

EMERGENCY DISPOSAL OF SEWAGE

The following information will help you to plan for a sewerage system shut down, and to set up a temporary toilet facility.

Following a significant event, it is likely that the sewerage system (toilets and piping) will not be functioning due to no water supply and broken pipes. You need to plan for the sewerage system to be unavailable for at least 5 days, as it may take some time before local authorities can set up alternate arrangements, or for the sewerage system to be restored.

DO NOT USE YOUR TOILET UNTIL YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES THAT THE SYSTEM IS OPERATING. YOUR TOILET WILL GET BLOCKED AND MAY OVERFLOW.

Human waste can carry diseases so it must be collected and disposed of carefully. Work with your neighbours and follow these instructions to set up safe temporary toilet facilities.

General information for all types of dwellings

How to make a temporary toilet

If the sewerage system is disrupted, you will need to set up temporary toilet facilities. Use your existing toilet, or a suitable container like a bucket. Some dwellings that have additional grass or land available on the property may also be able to construct a long-drop toilet.

Using your existing toilet, or a suitable container such as a bucket:

- Get a liner, such as a large rubbish bag (e.g. 23 litre drawstring bag) and place it in the toilet bowl.
- Make sure there are no holes in the bag to prevent leaking. This will ensure that no sewage enters into the disrupted sewerage system via the toilet.
- If possible, put shredded bits of paper in the bag to absorb urine.
- Keep the toilet, buckets or containers securely covered when not in use.



- Clearly identify the toilet that is for faeces only.
- Put ½ a cup of liquid bleach into the collection bag every morning.
- Carefully remove the bag when necessary.
- If you have a garden area, you may bury the plastic bag. Make sure you cover it well.
- Alternatively, store the sewage in a secure place, such as a lined covered bin, for collection later.



Checklist – What to add to your survival items

- Leak-proof rubbish bags to line toilet or suitable container – remember to have enough to last for up to 5 days
- Suitable container (if required)
- Enough rubbish bags for storing sewage (if required)
- Bleach
- Hand sanitiser
- Toilet paper and/or newspaper
- Gloves

REMEMBER: DO NOT FLUSH THE TOILET UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD IT IS SAFE TO DO SO.



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Hutt City Council
Porirua City Council
Upper Hutt City Council
Wellington City Council
Carterton District Council
Masterton District Council
Kapiti Coast District Council
South Wairarapa District Council
Greater Wellington Regional Council

Constructing a long-drop toilet

Some people will have enough land available to them on their property and are therefore able to construct a long-drop.

- Dig a hole up to 1 metre deep.
- Cover the waste with dirt after each use, or put a secure cover over the hole.
- Garden lime, insecticide or disinfectant can be added to the hole each day to reduce smells and flies.
- Use the long-drop until it is full to within 300mm of ground level.

Cover it completely with soil and dig a new long-drop.

Additional information specifically for apartment dwellers or hotels (or any other facility that has no access to a garden or grass area)

Disposal of sewage

- Work together to designate a bin where the plastic bags from your temporary toilets can be disposed of.
- A wheelie bin usually used for general household rubbish is ideal, or for larger complexes a skip bin (with a lid) may be required.
- Make sure everyone in your complex knows where to find this bin and what it is used for.

The bin should:

- Be securely covered with a lid, and lined with a thick plastic leak proof liner
- Have limited access for the general public and be clearly labelled "for infectious body waste only"
- Be outside, preferably in a shaded area

Everyone will need to continue to use the designated disposal bin until advised otherwise.

Checklist – Additional items that may be required for apartment dwellers or hotels

- Large bags to line wheelie bins or existing skip bins
- Bio hazard tape
- Signage

Important health tips

- Remember to wash your hands thoroughly. If there is no running water, wet wipes and alcohol sanitiser can be used. These should be included as some of your emergency survival items.
- Limit the number of people and amount of contact they have with sewage. Allocate one person to be responsible for managing the collection and disposal of waste.
- Bleach solution (1 part liquid bleach to 10 parts water) is a good disinfectant. It can be used for disinfecting/cleaning sewage spills or leaks. A small amount of bleach can be added to your bucket toilet each day. This will help to control smells and prevent insects breeding.
- Containers or holes that are being used for the collection of faeces and urine must be kept covered. This is to minimise odours and flies.

Remember the three simple steps that will help you and your family survive a disaster:

- Store **Emergency Water** (at least 3 litres per person per day, for at least 3 days)
- Have **Emergency Survival Items** (e.g. rubbish bags for lining the toilet, bleach and sanitiser)
- Have a **Household Emergency Plan**

For more information on preparing for an emergency please contact your local Council or visit www.wrcdemg.govt.nz



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