

Liquid Trade Waste Frequently Asked Questions

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I have had this business for years, why do I have to do something now?

In November 2005 Council adopted a new Trade Waste Policy in accordance with State legislation and the Department of Water and Energy's *Best Practice Management Guidelines, March 2005*. Under the Policy businesses identified as discharging trade waste must now gain formal Approval to discharge to Council's sewer.

The Trade Waste Policy ensures Council manages trade waste dischargers in a fair and consistent manner.

Do I need approval to discharge trade waste?

For compliance with Council's Trade Waste Policy and State Guidelines, Approval to discharge trade waste to Council's sewer must be gained for each business discharging trade waste. Approval is granted for 5 years. After 5 years a review of the activities on site is undertaken to determine if a new Approval is required.

For minor classification dischargers, such as hairdressers and florists, an application form does not need to be lodged with Council. Approval is granted following a site inspection which confirms all trade waste requirements are met.

For all other dischargers an application form must be completed and lodged with Council. There is an application fee for the lodgment of all applications. This fee is reviewed annually in accordance with Council's Revenue Policy.

Application forms are available from Council's Trade Waste staff and can be picked up from the Department of Engineering Services counter, faxed, emailed or posted to potential applicants.

What information do I need to attach to the application form?

For a rapid assessment of the application form, ensure all questions have been answered and the form is signed by the applicant and the property owner.

Any additional information that provides further details of the proposed/existing pretreatment and operating activities will assist in the assessment of the application. If an application form is received by Council as incomplete the form may be sent back to the applicant for further details which may delay the issue of Trade Waste Approval.

Plans attached to the application should include, but is not limited to, location of all processes, tanks, pits and apparatus associated with the generation of commercial liquid waste; capacity/dimensions, material of construction and lining of the proposed pretreatment facilities; and details of pipes and floor drainage conveying the wastewater. A plumber may be of assistance in compiling this information.

How do I calculate the volume of trade waste discharged daily to sewer?

The types of activities determine how the volume of trade waste discharged each day is calculated. All volumes discharged should be estimated for an *average* day.

For food preparation-type businesses the volume can be calculated by estimating the size of sinks (in litres) and multiplying by the number of times each sink is emptied. This figure is then added to the number of times the dishwasher is run multiplied by the litres discharged per cycle. This volume is then added to the litres used to wash/hose down the floor.

For mechanical or vehicle wash down-type businesses the volume can be calculated by totaling the time it takes to wash down and multiplying by the flow rate of the hose/spray. The flow rate depends on the type of hose and how fast it is running. For example, a standard hose running strongly uses approximately 20 litres/minute.

To calculate the exact volumes discharged a deduct or subtract meter may be installed by a plumber with the meter reads forwarded to Council for billing.

What is pretreatment and why do I need it?

Pretreatment refers to any device or installation that treats the liquid waste before it enters the sewer. Basic pretreatment includes sink screens and in-floor dry basket arrestors. More complex installations include grease arrestors, cooling pits, dilution pits and oil separators.

Almost all trade waste requires screening of some type before the liquid waste flows to sewer or onto more complex treatment, such as in a grease arrestor. Screening removes solids from the waste stream which can cause sewer and pipework blockages which can be costly to repair.

Sewerage systems are generally designed for waste from domestic sources that are of predictable strength and quality. Untreated trade waste can put much greater demands on Council's sewerage system than domestic sources, and can impact on the public, workers, the environment, and Council's sewerage system if not managed properly. For example, grease, oil and solids can build up causing blockages and sewer overflows; strong wastes can cause corrosion of the sewerage system or produce offensive odours to the public.

What are dry basket arrestors and fixed sink screens?

Dry Basket Arrestors (DBAs) are designed to capture large solids and fibrous materials. They consist of a stainless steel top grate, a stainless steel mesh lift-out basket that sits below the top grate, and a stainless steel fixed screen at the bottom. Some designs have a shut-off valve mechanism that stops flow to sewer if the basket is not in place.

Smaller DBAs can be readily retro-fitted into existing floor wastes.

Fixed Sink Screens are screens with mesh apertures less than 3mm that are fixed to the sink plug hole. Being fixed they are always in place when water flows to sewer to ensure solids are captured and can be disposed of appropriately.

What is a Backflow Prevention Device?

Backflow prevention devices prevent the flow of water contrary to the normal or intended direction. Backflow can occur where there is a loss in pressure between the water main and the property's water service, such as when there is a break in the water main.

An example of a risk associated with backflow for properties with grease arrestors involve servicing of the arrestor. During pump-out the arrestor is hosed out to remove all build up of grease and solids. If the hose is left in the arrestor after servicing and there is a loss in pressure in the water main, the greasy water inside the arrestor may be siphoned back up through the hose causing contamination of the water supply.

There are a number of different backflow devices including a reduced pressure zone device, a registered air gap and a testable double check valve. These may be located near the water meter or any taps near pretreatment, such as a grease arrestor or oil separator. A plumber may be of assistance in completing this section of the application forms.

Who can help with my trade waste application?

Council's Trade Waste staff are available to answer questions and provide information on the requirements, application forms and charges.

A plumber or environmental/building consultant may be of assistance in regards to the available pretreatment installations, technical drawings, screens and backflow devices.

Resources on the internet can provide further information on the general requirements. Follow links on the Trade Waste section on Council's website (www.bathurst.nsw.gov.au) to some useful websites.

What are the trade waste fees and charges for my business?

The cost of being a compliant trade waste discharger is determined by a number of factors. This includes the cost of upgrading existing pretreatment to that required by Council's Trade Waste Policy, the volume (and strength for larger dischargers) of trade waste discharged to Council's sewer, and the type of business. Further advice can be provided to individual businesses when submitting their application.

Greater costs can however be incurred for not complying with the Trade Waste Policy. Non-compliance charges may be applied where a pretreatment installation, for example a grease arrestor, is not properly maintained or desludged, and can attract a trade waste usage charge of \$14.00/kL* for that billing period. These non-compliance charges are designed to cover the additional costs to Council to accept and treat the waste.

* Charges are for 2009/10 and subject to an annual review

Who is responsible for trade waste charges?

All trade waste charges are billed to the property owner (the ratepayer). If the property owner is not the business operator, the owner may pass on the trade waste fees and charges to the business if provided for in an agreement such as a tenancy agreement.

The fees and charges will be levied until written notice has been received by Council from the property owner stating the business/activity identified is no longer in operation or is moving premises. Cleanout and/or disconnection of pretreatment installations may be required before Council acknowledges the activities have ceased at the property.

How can I reduce my trade waste bill?

For some businesses there is a usage charge for the volume of trade waste discharged to sewer. This is calculated as a percentage of trade waste discharged compared to the consumption of water for the property. By reducing water used and discharged, the usage charges if applicable, may decrease.

Some tips to reduce the wastewater discharged to sewer includes, but is not limited to, minimising time spent washing down; dry sweeping floors instead of using the hose; using a trigger hose to control spray; rinsing dishes in a plugged sink rather than under running water; and installation of water saving appliances and running dishwashers only when there is a full load.

How many businesses discharge trade waste?

Approximately 350 businesses in the Bathurst area have been identified as discharging trade waste, with most inspected and either in the process of gaining trade waste approval or have been granted Approval. The remainder are to be inspected and the appropriate actions undertaken in the near future.

If you are not in the process of gaining approval, do not have approval, or have an outdated Agreement (prior to 2005) contact Council's Trade Waste staff to arrange an inspection and assessment of your business.