



## **PLANNING REQUIREMENTS IN RESPECT OF THE USE OF NON MAINS SEWERAGE INCORPORATING SEPTIC TANKS AND NEW DEVELOPMENT**

### **Welsh Office Circular 10/99**

The above circular came into force on 1st April 1999. It places responsibility on a developer of any future development producing “domestic” sewage to demonstrate that the scheme can be effectively served by an adequate sewerage system. Applications for planning permission where foul drainage is to discharge to any non-mains sewerage now needs to be supported **prior to registration**, by an assessment of the proposed use of septic tanks, cesspools and package sewage treatment plants. This assessment should confirm that no adverse effects will arise. In practical terms this will mean that proper percolation tests **must** accompany the application or it will not be registered.

To assist in your consideration as to what means of sewerage system is appropriate, the specific requirements for each type of disposal method is given below:-

### **Septic Tanks**

The assessment should focus on likely effects on the environment, amenity and public health. In particular, it should address the impact of disposal on the final effluent, whether it is discharged to a water course or disposed of by soakage into the ground.

Soil porosity (percolation) tests are seen as an integral part of the assessment and should be submitted with the application.

Where septic tanks are unlikely to produce an acceptable solution, the advice is that the application may be refused. This decision would, of course, take into account the views of the Environment Agency and other bodies, including the relevant County Council's comments.

### **Cesspools**

These are discouraged as they can cause problems if not properly constructed or maintained. If such a system is proposed, the application should be supported with full details of capacity and size, along with the arrangements for maintenance and regular emptying.

## **Package Sewage Treatment Plans**

These are a suitable alternative to septic tanks. Applications will need to give details of the product type, capacity and whether the final discharge is to ground soakaway or a water course. If discharge is to a soakaway, percolation tests will be necessary. If discharge is to a water course, a "discharge consent" from the Environment Agency is needed, and a copy should be enclosed with the application.

### **Details required in application**

Applications (including those for outline planning permission) which involve "domestic" sewage should include the following:-

#### **(i) For Septic Tanks**

- \* A block plan indicating the position of the septic tanks and its discharge/soakage area. This area should be within the application site.
- \* Percolation (soil porosity) test results.
- \* Capacity of tank, number of chambers and the number of persons the tank will serve.

#### **(ii) For Package Sewage Treatment Plans**

- \* The product type, manufacturer, capacity and method of discharge.
- \* Percolation (soil porosity) test results and a copy of the Discharge Consent.
- \* A block plan showing the location of the plant and the drainage arrangements. The plant and arrangements must be within the application site.

#### **(iii) For Cesspools**

- \* The size and capacity and what arrangements are made for emptying and maintenance.

#### **(iv) Alternative Non-mains Drainage Options**

For example, reed bed systems. Specify the exact arrangements and include a plan.

For further guidance please refer direct to the circular. Further information can be found in the Environment Agency's publication "Pollution Prevention Guidelines"; Code of Practice 6297, 1983 and CIRIA Technical Note 146.

**For non mains sewage arrangements the attached forms should be completed and returned as part of the planning application.**