

Fire-impacted septic systems

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Returning to your property after a fire

If your property has been affected by fire, a licensed plumber or service technician should assess your septic system for safety and function. Your local council can provide information on these assessments or inspections.

If you use a damaged system, there's a risk that sewage could back up into your house or garden. This could cause a human health and pollution risk. You may not be able to use your septic system until it has been repaired or replaced.

Septic systems

Onsite wastewater management systems (commonly known as septic tanks) are used on residential, community and business premises. They treat, recycle or dispose of:

- greywater, which comes from showers, baths, hand basins, washing machines, laundry troughs and kitchens
- blackwater, which is toilet waste (from water-flush, incineration or dry composting systems)
- sewage, which is combined greywater and blackwater.

Assessing damage

Fire may have damaged the septic systems at your property.

Parts of the system which may be damaged include:

- shallow PVC pipes, which may be melted or blocked
- plastic tanks and sumps (concrete tanks are less likely to be damaged, but should still be inspected)
- plastic irrigation pipework, which may also be heat affected
- pumps and other equipment with electrical components.

If you need to replace your system, you can find information about regulations and systems on EPA's website. Your local council issues permits to install or alter a septic system. They will be able to advise you on the process to apply for a permit.

Further information

Contact EPA on 1300 372 842
or epa.vic.gov.au

Incident information and updates:
emergency.vic.gov.au

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