

Proposed Natural Resources Plan Pit Latrines



Long drops

A long drop (also known as a pit latrine) is the most basic type of toilet and is essentially just a pit or hole dug in the ground. They are also known as ‘dry latrines’ as they don’t require water to flush. Long drops offer a low cost toilet option for isolated or remote areas where there is no water supply.

The waste in a long drop is broken down in much the same way as garden compost is made, through decomposition by microorganisms, fungi and earthworms. No chemicals are used which results in a very natural eco-friendly toilet option. If a long drop is installed in the wrong place, it can contaminate groundwater, therefore some basic provisions are necessary to ensure good practice.

What you need to know when building a long drop

Building a long drop is a permitted activity under the Proposed Natural Resources Plan (PNRP) see Pit Latrine, Rule R71: <http://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Plans--Publications/Regional-Plan-Review/Proposed-Plan/Chapter-5-Rules.pdf>.

This means that resource consent is not required, provided the following conditions are met:

- There is no sewer connection available.
- It is located outside of a community drinking water supply protection area (refer to: <http://www.gwrc.govt.nz/assets/Plans--Publications/Regional-Plan-Review/Proposed-Plan/Chapter-13-maps.pdf> maps 26, 27a, 27b and 27c).
- It is located at least 50m away from waterways, gullies and bores.
- There is at least 0.6m clearance between the bottom of the pit and the groundwater table.
- Stormwater is prevented from entering the long drop.
- It is located in soils that are not free draining, ie, silt or clay.
- Any smells coming from the long drop must not affect the neighbours.

Advice:

1. When your long drop is full (ie, within 1m of ground level) it should be covered over with earth, and a (replacement) long drop should be dug somewhere else. The old pit should have soil mounded over it so that as it settles over time, water doesn't pond on top of it.
2. If the pit has been dug deep enough and is not used too often, it may never become full. The waste will slowly decompose and the volume will remain stable. A good rule of thumb is to allow a depth based on a volume of at least 0.06 m³ per person/per year. For this and more information, please refer to the Factsheet 3.4 Simple Pit Latrines http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/hygiene/emergencies/fs3_4.pdf for more information.
3. To find out if you need a resource consent or if you are unsure about any of the conditions, please contact Greater Wellington info@gw.govt.nz or 0800 496 734.
4. Approval may also be needed from your local city or district council. Please contact them directly for further advice.
 - a. Masterton District Council, 06- 3706300, mdc@mstn.govt.nz
 - b. South Wairarapa District Council, 06 -3069611, enquiries@swdc.govt.nz
 - c. Carterton District Council, 06- 3794030, info@cdc.govt.nz
 - d. Upper Hutt, 04- 5272169, askus@uhcc.govt.nz
 - e. Lower Hutt, 04 - 5706666 , contact@huttcity.govt.nz
 - f. Wellington City Council, 04- 4994444, info@wcc.govt.nz
 - g. Porirua City Council, 04 237 5089 enquiries@pcc.govt.nz
 - h. Kapiti Coast District Council, 04 2964700, kapiti.council@kapiticoast.govt.nz

This information is intended to provide a guideline to the requirements of the Proposed Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region. Please also be aware of the requirements in the current operative plan as well as the provisions mentioned in this user guide.

Sources used:

http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/hygiene/emergencies/fs3_4.pdf
<https://www.google.co.nz/search?q=pit+latrines&biw=1440&bih=754&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&sqi=2&ved=0ahUKewijja-klp7MAhXEJpQKHTVqAWMQsAQINA>
<http://www.qdc.govt.nz/assets/Files/EnvHealth/Living/Septic-Tank-Brochure.pdf>
<http://water.worldbank.org/shw-resource-guide/infrastructure/menu-technical-options/pit-latrines>
<http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/1206028/>
http://practicalaction.org/practicalanswers/product_info.php?products_id=237%7B1%7D1

