



## Frequently Asked Questions

### WHAT IS THE PENINSULA ECO PROJECT?

South East Water's Peninsula ECO Project is a new pressure sewer system installed along the southern Mornington Peninsula. It will replace septic tank systems and treatment plants on 16,500 properties. These systems are leaking wastewater contaminated with bacteria and chemicals (E.coli, nitrogen) into our environment. By connecting properties to a modern sewer, we will fix this problem and make the peninsula a healthier place to live.

### ABOUT ECO

#### Q. Why do we need a sewerage system?

- A. Septic tank systems and treatment plants may seem low maintenance but they are polluting our environment with untreated, contaminated water. Dirty water seeps from our yards, through the peninsula's sandy soils, into our groundwater, bays and beaches. You cannot see the pollution but it is there. It is at its worst during the busier holiday periods. The Peninsula ECO Project will eliminate this problem permanently by replacing onsite septic tank system/treatment plants with a mains sewer connection.

#### Q. What will this mean for us?

- A. The Peninsula ECO Project will give us a cleaner peninsula. Connecting means:
- A healthier home for your family
  - More of your land to use as you please
  - No more nasty smells or dampness
  - Lower maintenance costs
  - A cleaner peninsula for us all to enjoy

*The Westport Bay town of Flinders is an example of how replacing household septic tank systems with sewer connections can make a big difference. The household connections program there reduced E.coli levels in groundwater and waterways by about 90 per cent.*

#### Q. Why use a pressure sewer system?

- A. The peninsula's topography does not allow for a conventional gravity sewer. The pipes are too big and would damage the environment. A state of the art pressure sewer system is better, using smaller pipes and less intrusive installation techniques.

### ABOUT CONNECTING

#### Q. When can I connect?

- A. Properties in Rye, Blairgowrie, Sorrento, Portsea and St Andrews Beach are available to connect now.

#### Q. What does connection involve?

- A. Connecting is easy. South East Water will install a Pressure Sewer System at your property and connect the system to the sewer main located in your street. Any plumber can connect your house to this system and decommission your current system (if applicable). This is known as the home connection and takes just one day. Decommissioning your current system involves removing the tank contents, breaking holes in it to avoid future liquid retention/build up and backfilling with topsoil.

#### Q. What are the components installed on my property?

- A. 1. A boundary kit, used to connect the property to the sewer network. It is positioned near the main sewer.  
 2. A pump and tank unit, installed below ground in a position agreed with you. Only the lid is visible.  
 3. A property service line, connecting the boundary kit to the pumping unit and sewer network.  
 4. Our innovative OneBox® remote control and monitoring unit, telemetrically connected to our 24 hour operations centre.

#### Q. Can I use my plumber for the installation?

- A. Any licensed plumber is eligible to complete the home connection. You can appoint your own or use one of ours.

#### Q. What if I don't know where my current onsite system is located?

- A. The contractors will attempt to locate the tank during their site visit when they arrive or return with specialist equipment to find it.

**Q. What disruption can I expect to my property on the day?**

- A. The installation team will minimise any property disruption and return the landscape to its original condition, or as close as possible.

**Q. Do I need to make any home modifications to accommodate the new connection e.g. replace sinks and fittings?**

- A. No

**Q. How long will I be without access to water and sewerage during installation?**

- A. Sewer access will be offline for up to two hours on the day and the installation team will warn you beforehand. Water supply will not be affected.

**Q. What substances can and cannot be put through the new system?**

- A. All property wastewater flows through the new system except rainwater, swimming pool and external discharge.

Customers with a pool must have a cartridge filter installed by pool contractor to receive backwash.

Substances that should not be discharged into the sewerage system because they may cause blockages, include:

- Cooking oil and fats
- Glass
- Metal
- Flushable wipes
- Other wipes e.g. baby wipes, hand wipes, antiseptic wipes
- Seafood shells
- Rocks
- Nappies, socks, rags or clothes
- Chemicals, except common domestic products e.g. dishwashing powder, detergents, hair dyes
- Plastic objects
- Sanitary napkins/tampons
- Pet litter
- Flammable materials
- Lubricating oil/grease
- Petrol/diesel
- Paints (water soluble and oil based)

If you're in doubt about what substances the sewer system can accommodate, please call the hotline (132 812).

**Q. What maintenance will the new system require?**

- A. No ongoing system operation or maintenance is required of you. If the OneBox<sup>®</sup> alarm sounds, call the South East Water 24 hour emergency hotline (132 812) while ensuring you maintain an electricity supply. If the power fails, the tank has 24 hours of capacity before it fills. When power resumes, it will automatically empty to normal operating levels. The pressure sewer system connection to the street is fully maintained by South East Water.

## ABOUT PAYMENT

**Q. How much does connection cost?**

- A. Please call or visit the connections team for a precise quote to connect your property.

The total installation cost includes four parts:

1. The connection fee: this is the main cost and includes tank installation and sewer connection.
2. Septic tank system decommissioning and connection from your house to the new tank.
3. Ongoing costs following connection include sewer disposal, sewage service and system electricity supply.

Prices are authorised by our regulator, the Essential Services Commission.

**Q. How do I pay?**

- A. By credit card or cheque. Our connections team will assess your eligibility for any payment plan option.

**Q. Is there any financial assistance available to help with the cost of connecting?**

- A. Assistance to cover the costs of connecting the home plumbing to the Pressure Sewer System may be available through DHHS. To find out more please talk to our team on 1800 720 613.

## ABOUT BUYING AND SELLING

**Q. What should I do if I'm buying a property.**

- A. Call our connections team to check if the property is already connected to the sewer.

**Q. What should I do if I am selling my property?**

- A. Connecting your property to the sewer will make it a more attractive, and potentially more valuable, prospect for any potential buyer.

Peninsula



**1800 720 613**

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South East  
Water

