

## On-site Wastewater Management Training Course

### General Environmental Duty (GED)

Centre for Environmental Training



### General Environmental Duty

- Businesses are responsible for protecting the environment and human health
- Commences on 1 July 2021 under the amended Environment Protection Act 2017
- Intended to reduce the risk of harm from activities:
  - to human health and the environment
  - from pollution or waste

Centre for Environmental Training



### Businesses

- Must manage activities to avoid the risk of environmental damage
- Must respond if pollution does occur
- For businesses already managing their environmental risks, the GED generally means little to no change to how they operate
- The GED just makes it clear your responsibility is to reduce risk to the environment

Centre for Environmental Training



### Common risks

- Business activities that produce noise, odour or runoff to stormwater
- Storage, use and disposal of liquids and chemicals
- Management of wastes and the choice of transporter or receiver of wastes

Centre for Environmental Training



### Responsibilities under GED

- Understand and assess your risks
- Eliminate or reduce risks as far as reasonably practicable
- Taking reasonably practicable action means you have put in 'proportionate' controls to eliminate or minimise risks of harm. Proportionate means the greater the risk of potential harm, the greater the expectation for you to manage it. 'Controls' can include any or all of: elimination, engineering controls, training and safe site practices

Centre for Environmental Training



### The amended Environment Protection Act 2017

- How to comply with the law
  - Manage Environmental Risk
  - Build State of Knowledge
- Understand and assess your risks
- Eliminate or reduce them as far as reasonably practicable
- State of Knowledge is what is known about the risks from your business activities and about the controls you can put in place to manage the risks

Centre for Environmental Training



## Medium to high-risk activities

- Handling and storing liquids
- Disposing of chemicals
- Receiving, storing and treating waste
- Discharging industrial waste
- *Assessing and controlling risk: a guide for business* (EPA VIC publication 1695)

Centre for Environmental Training



## Wastewater guidance

Onsite wastewater guidance:

- <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/environmental-information/water/about-wastewater/onsite-wastewater-systems>

How to use wastewater:

- <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/for-business/find-a-topic/prevent-water-pollution/using-and-recycling-wastewater>

Centre for Environmental Training



## How to manage onsite wastewater treatment systems

Onsite wastewater treatment systems with valid certificates:

- AS/NZS 1546.1: 2008 – Onsite domestic wastewater treatment units – septic tanks
- AS/NZS 1546.2: 2008 – Onsite domestic wastewater treatment units – waterless composting toilets
- AS 1546.3:2017 – Onsite domestic wastewater treatment units – Part 3: aerated wastewater treatment systems
- AS/NZS 1546.3:2008 – Onsite domestic wastewater treatment units – secondary treatment systems
- AS 1546.4: 2016 – On-site domestic wastewater treatment units – Domestic greywater treatment systems

Centre for Environmental Training



## State of Knowledge

- AS/NZS 1546.1: 2008
- AS/NZS 1546.2: 2008
- AS 1546.3:2017
- AS/NZS 1546.3:2008
- AS 1546.4: 2016
- AS 1547:2012 – Onsite domestic wastewater management
- EPA VIC 891.4 (2016) Code of Practice for Onsite Wastewater Management (under revision)
- MAV and DSE (2014) Victorian Land Capability Framework

Centre for Environmental Training

