

# Media Release

**The Hon Harriet Shing MP**

Minister for Water

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy

Minister for Equality



Thursday, 22 June 2023

## **SUPPORTING COUNCILS TO DELIVER SAFE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT**

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting councils and shires to improve critical wastewater management processes to better protect public health and the environment.

Minister for Water Harriet Shing today announced the \$1.28 million Onsite Domestic Wastewater Management (ODWM) grants program. The funding will also support better planning and management of wastewater to help avoid septic tank spills, which can occur after heavy rainfall.

The grants program encourages local government authorities to incorporate environmental and sustainable practices into managing existing and new onsite wastewater management systems.

Thirty-seven councils have already received support, and funding given to seventeen more councils will help them deliver safe wastewater management at the local level.

Improving onsite wastewater management plans by strengthening the risk assessment process will help council develop mitigation measures like local community awareness campaigns to minimise any potential issues.

Local councils and shires will also complete field research to pinpoint existing wastewater systems and assess their current conditions.

This initiative is part of the Labor Government's Water for Victoria, our long-term strategic plan to guide smarter water management, bolster the water grid and support more liveable Victorian communities.

Water for Victoria recognises that the sector needs to work closely with communities, including local governments, when making critical water supply and wastewater management decisions.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Water Harriet Shing**

*"The program helps councils address knowledge gaps, improve planning and wastewater management - protecting communities from septic tank spills."*

*"In total, we're supporting 54 councils to adopt environmental and sustainable practices into managing existing and new wastewater systems."*

*"The work being funded will contribute to reducing onsite wastewater management issues, improving the health of local water environments and amenities of urban communities."*

**Councils receiving grants in round 2 include:**

- Gannawarra
- Frankston
- Geelong CC
- Knox CC
- Moyne SC
- Whittlesea
- Whitehorse
- Mt Alexander
- Pyrenees
- Brimbank
- Queenscliffe
- Buloke
- Murrindindi
- Northern Grampians
- Mansfield
- Towong
- Hepburn