



Protecting your health in an emergency Sewage disposal

TN: There are two logos at the top of the page. On the left is: Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa New Zealand Government. On the right is: Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand.

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What's the risk?

In a natural disaster or emergency event, your plumbing or sewerage system may be damaged. This means you may

not be able to use your toilet until your council advises it's safe to use again.

If the sewerage system is damaged, then you will need to use a temporary toilet until it is fixed.

How to make a temporary toilet— inside:

Wear gloves to avoid contamination and follow these steps:

1. Shut off the water valve behind the cistern.
2. Remove the lid of the cistern and use a container to empty water from the cistern (this water can be re-used.)
3. Using a container, remove water from the toilet bowl and dispose of this water.
4. Use your existing toilet, or a bucket. Fit a large heavy duty plastic rubbish bag into the toilet bowl or bucket.
5. Make sure there are no holes in the plastic bag so that it does not leak.
6. Place shredded paper in the bottom of the bag to collect urine.
7. Put down the toilet lid or cover the bucket when not in use.
8. Wash hands after use.
9. Put half a cup of bleach into the collection bag every morning.

When the bag becomes half full:

- Put on rubber gloves.
- Tie the top of the bag and remove it carefully.
- Bury the bag outside. **Do not bury in the vegetable garden.**
- For those without garden space, put the bag into a designated wheelie bin. This bin should be covered with a lid, and lined with a thick plastic leak proof liner and situated outside, preferably in a shaded area if possible.

How to make a long drop toilet— outside:

- **Do not dig long drops in the vegetable garden or near water sources.**
- Where you have space, dig a hole one metre deep.
- Construct a seat from planks of wood.
- Each time the long drop is used either cover the waste with dirt or cover the hole.
- To reduce smells and flies throw a little garden lime, insecticide or disinfectant into the hole.
- Use the long drop until the waste is within 30cm from the top (ground level).
- Fill in hole with soil and make a new long drop.

Important health tips

1. Wash and dry your hands, every time, after using the toilet or handling human waste.
2. Limit the number of people handling waste—nominate one family member to manage the collection and disposal of waste.
3. Cover all containers and holes to reduce smells and flies.

Keep listening to your radio for instructions, information, and advice

For more health information go to www.healthnavigator.org.nz or phone 0800 611 116.

**End of Protecting your health in an emergency
Sewage disposal**