

Planting guide for septic system areas

Your septic system does not have to restrict the landscaping of your property. Plenty of plants can and will contribute to the look, feel and function of your garden without causing damage.

Grass is always the best option surrounding your septic tank, pump chamber and sand filter area. The best plants for landscaping around your septic system are those with shallow roots, non-water seeking and non-root invasive plants which are happy in dry conditions. Plants should draw water but not shade the system.

You do have to be mindful that some vegetation can cause major problems to your septic system. Trees on top of any part of the septic system must be avoided. Roots can infiltrate the system, effluent field and associated pipes, causing blockages or breakages, preventing the septic system from functioning as it should. These situations can be minimised by the careful planning and appropriate placement of plants, shrubs and trees.

Below is a list of plants that should not be planted on or within 10m of your septic system due to the risk of roots blocking the pipes.

Never plant on or within 10m of your system

- River Red Gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*
- Lemon Scented Gum *Eucalyptus citriodora*
- Claret Ash *Fraxinus raywoodi*
- Sugar Gum *Eucalyptus cladocalyx*
- Plane Tree *Platanus – all species*
- Poplar *Populus nigra*
- Weeping Willow *Salix babylonica*
- Alder *Alnus – all species*



Below is a list of suitable plants, although extensive it is not exhaustive. For further advice about the best plants to use on your property, we recommend you contact your local nursery or ask an appropriately qualified person to help you.

Grasses, sedges, rushes and lilies

- Tussock Grass *Poa labillardierei*
- Tall Wheat Grass *Thinopyrum ponticum*
- Lawn Turf Grass
- Weeping Grass *Microlaena stipoides*
- Knobby Club-rush *Isolepis nodosa*
- Tall Spike-rush *Eleocharis sphacelata*
- Common Spike-rush *Eleocharis palustris*
- Soft Bog-rush *Schoenus tesquorum*
- Tall Rush *Juncus procerus*
- Sea Rush *Juncus kraussii*
- Slender Bog-rush *Schoenus lepidosperma*
- Zig-zag Bog-rush *Schoenus brevifolius*
- Spiny-headed Mat-rush *Lomandra longifolia*
- Common Spike-rush *Eleocharis acuta*
- Hydrangea *Hydrangea*
- Common Rapier-sedge *Lepidosperma filiforme*
- Saw-sedge *Gahnia filum*
- Wire Rapier-sedge *Lepidosperma semiteres*
- Common Grass-sedge *Carex breviculmis*
- Swamp Club-sedge *Isolepis inundata*
- Tall Saw-sedge *Gahnia clarkei*
- Pale Twig-sedge *Baumea acuta*
- Common Sword-sedge *Lepidosperma longitudinale*
- Tall sedge *Carex appressa*
- Black-anther Flax-lilly *Dianell revoluta*
- Tasman Flax-lily *Dianella tasmanica*
- Pale Flax-lily *Dianella longifolia*
- Short Purple-flag *Patersonia fragilis*
- Cannas *Eleocharis acuta*

Trees and shrubs

- Swamp Paperbark *Melaleuca ericifolia*
- Salt Paperbark *Melaleuca halmaturorum*
- Scented Paperbark *Melaleuca squarrosa*
- Hop Goodenia *Goodenia ovata*
- Cross Honey Myrtle *Melaleuca decussata*
- Creeping Saltbush *Atriplex semibaccata*
- Coast Saltbush *Atriplex cinerea*
- Marsh Saltbush *Atriplex paludosa*
- Austral Indigo *Indigofera australis*
- Heath Tea-tree *Leptospermum myrsinoides*
- Woolly Tea-tree *Leptospermum lanigerum*
- Prickly Tea-tree *Leptospermum continentale*
- Sticky Wattle *Acacia howittii*
- Crimson Bottlebrush *Callistemon citrinus*
- Scarlet Bottlebrush *Callistemon macropunctatus*
- Flowering Tamarisk *Tamarix juniperina*

Groundcovers

- Oyster Plant *Acanthus mollis*
- Royal Mantle *Laurifolia x willsii*
- Blue Star Creeper *Isotoma fluviatilis*
- Lily Turf *Liriope giganteum*
- Native Violet *Viola hederacea*
- Geranium *Geraniaceae*
- Strawberry Clover *Trifolium Fragiferum*
- White Clover *Trifolium repens*
- Perennials

Climbers

- Snake Vine *Hibbertia scandens*
- Glory Vine *Vitis coignetiae*
- Ivy *Hederas*
- Happy Wanderer *Hardenbergia violacea*
- Japanese Honeysuckle *Lonicera japonica*
- Bougainvillea
- Jasmine

Trees and shrubs - over 2m way from system

- Western Coastal Wattle *Acacia cyclops*
- Swallow Wattle *Acacia longifolia*
- Wirilda *Acacia retinoides*
- Weeping Bottlebrush *Callistemon viminalis*
- Lilac Bottlebrush *Callistemon lilacinus*
- Bell-fruit Mallee *Eucalyptus pressiana*
- Willow leaf Hakea *Hakea saligna*