

**The US Alliance, on behalf of South East Water are responsible for the delivery of the Sewerage Scheme to the towns of Belgrave Heights and Belgrave South. The US Alliance comprise; South East Water, Thies Services, Siemens and MWH – bringing together the skills, experience, and capabilities of these organisations in the construction and operation of community infrastructure. South East Water and the US Alliance are committed to working in close consultation with the Community to deliver this vital community infrastructure to the Belgrave Heights and Belgrave South townships.**

**Q1. Why do we need a sewerage scheme?**

A1. The Scheme is required, as there is direct evidence of wastes from failing on-site household wastewater units polluting the streams and environment in the area. Many of the existing onsite wastewater units (or septic tanks) can no longer be relied on to protect the environment and consequently there are also health risks for the community. This is due to a combination of relatively small allotment size, steep topography, shallow rock and impermeable soils and rainfall.

Yarra Ranges Shire Council and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) support this sewerage scheme as the best solution to improve the local environment and reduce the existing health risks.

**Q2. Is my Property part of the scheme?**

A2. The sewerage scheme will be provided to existing properties that are unable to sustainably contain their wastewaters. In deciding which allotments is part of the scheme, the considerations taken are size (generally, smaller than 0.4Ha) and volume of wastewater generated onsite and the viability of connecting the property to the scheme.

**Q3. What will be the cost of connecting to the Scheme?**

A3. The Sewer scheme for your town involves the installation of a Sewerage system, of which South East Water will fund the majority – at a cost of over \$20,000 per property.

However with all Sewer schemes, there are some contributions that are payable by the property owner. South East Water will assist owners to minimise plumbing costs by working with you to locate your pump unit or connection point in the most economical location (with consideration of construction limitations).

Property owners should budget for the following costs as part of this sewer connection process. The house plumbing costs are indicative only (based on previous projects) and costs may vary from these.

Upon connection to the Scheme, you will be asked to make a financial contribution of \$500 which will be included in your quarterly water and sewerage charges bill at \$25 per quarter for five years, as well as a one off \$45.00 connection fee. You will be required to cover your plumbing costs to connect to the system – typically this is between \$1,000 - \$5,000.



This cost varies for each property, depending on the location of your pump unit or connection to your house. You will also be required to pay the electricity cost to operate the pump unit on your property – this cost is typically \$25-\$30 per annum for an average family household. If an upgrade to your property electrical system is required, you will also be required to cover this cost.

**Q4. What ongoing costs will I have to pay?**

A4. Once connected, your ongoing fees will include standard sewer service charges and the sewage disposal charges (as at 1<sup>st</sup> July 2009, the costs for a residential property are; sewerage service charge of \$48.16 per quarter and the sewerage disposal charge of \$1.2565 per kilolitre of water usage per quarter), as well as the electricity cost as detailed above.

**Q5. Why should I connect to the Scheme?**

A5. The environmental and health benefits to individual properties and the community as a whole, will only be maximised when all properties are connected to the scheme, therefore South East Water have set fees to encourage connection.

In addition you will avoid the ongoing costs of maintaining your onsite wastewater (or septic) system and potentially eliminate areas of continual damp or odour on or near your property.

**Q6. If my allotment is not part of the scheme can I connect?**

A6. Yes you can connect, however your connection costs will be higher. Normal new connection costs will apply. If you are considering connecting and you are not part of the scheme, contact either a South East Water or an US Alliance team member to understand the costs of connection.

**Q7. When can I expect connections will commence?**

A7. Before connection work can begin to individual properties, construction of the street reticulation pipe work and transfer system needs to be completed, which is scheduled for early to mid 2010.

**Q8. What do I have to do to connect to the Scheme?**

A8. Leading up to, and when the sewer scheme is available for you to connect, South East Water will notify you and provide you with all the information and documentation you will need to assist you to connect. Following your application to connect, South East Water staff will consult with you to agree on the location for the pump unit or connection on your property.

South East Water encourage you to start budgeting for the costs (as detailed in Q3 ) associated with connection as soon as possible.

***We appreciate your comments and feedback. Please call or email; Niki Chalmers on 03 9768 5306 or [niki.chalmers@sewl.com.au](mailto:niki.chalmers@sewl.com.au)***

