



## Rainwater Tanks

### Definition of tanks

A rainwater tank is defined as a Class 10 building or structure that is a covered tank, or combination of covered tanks, used to collect and store rainwater from a building's roof. The definition also includes the standard or other structure that supports the tank.



### Do I need an approval?

Where tanks meet the following criteria as outlined in the Building Regulation 2021, approval is **not required**:

- Less than 10m<sup>2</sup> in area or less than 3.6m in diameter; and
- Less than 2.4m in height from natural ground level; and
- Less than 5.0m in length; and
- Structurally suitable for its intended water volume and pressure.

Note 1: Further criteria applies in the Queensland Development Code MP4.2 - Rainwater Tanks and other Supplementary Water Supply Systems.

Note 2: Where your property is located within a bushfire hazard planning overlay area (see Planning Scheme Mapping on Councils website) and in an area of no reticulated water supply, some exceptions can apply. Further information in this regard can be found in the bushfire hazard overlay code from the planning scheme.

Should you not meet the above, approvals **will be required**. See below.

### Location

It is important to not only ensure the location of the tank works for yourself but will not adversely impact your neighbours (including overflow, blocking of natural light, amenity and aesthetic).

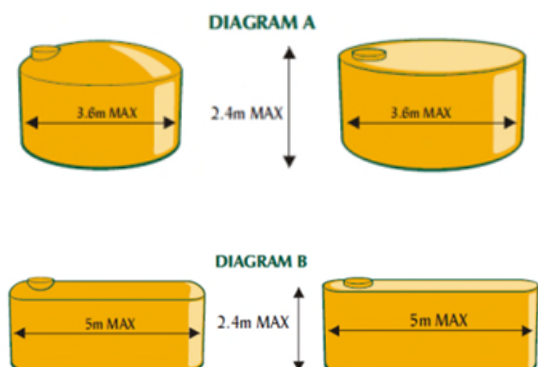
Your consideration process should include ensuring adequate property boundary and easement setbacks are followed.

The Queensland Development Code (MP1.2 provides as follows for lots over 450m<sup>2</sup>. Other requirements apply to lots under 450m<sup>2</sup>):

- *Front boundary* – minimum of 6.0m from any road frontage property boundary. Certain concessions apply (see MP1.2);
- *Side and rear boundaries (Round / Slimline Tanks)*  
As a class 10 structure, it can be built to the boundary with a maximum length of 9m, inclusive of all other buildings or structures on the boundary, however cannot be closer than 1.5m to a required window of a habitable room.

Maximum diameter must not exceed 3.6m or a height of 2.4m. Should these measurements be exceeded, a boundary setback of a minimum of 1.5m from the side and rear boundaries will apply. See Diagrams A and B below.

Additionally, slimline tanks cannot exceed 5m in length without a boundary setback relaxation approval. See Diagram B below.





### Plumbing Fixtures

Where a rainwater tank is connected to an existing building to the internal fixtures such as toilet/s and washing machine/s and is also connected to the reticulated water supply, a Notifiable Work Form 4 is to be submitted to the QBCC. All new building require a plumbing approval. The application should therefore identify:

- (a) an automatic switching device which allows the tank to be changed over to the reticulated water supply and back again, as required, or
- (b) a backflow prevention device to reduce potential risk of contamination of the reticulated water supply from the subject tank.

Where the tank is proposed as part of a new building, it will be assessed with the building and plumbing applications.

Please contact Council's Plumbing Department to obtain setbacks details from onsite sewerage facilities and disposal areas.

Note: the building application will be assessed through a private building certifier and the plumbing application through Council.

### **Overflow from your tank**

It is the responsibility of the property owner to ensure adequate management of their rainwater tank overflow to prevent potential flooding and/or damage downstream or to neighbouring properties. An appropriate discharge point (ie. kerb and channel, inter-allotment stormwater drainage system or soakage pit should be used as the discharge point for overflow piping from the rainwater tank.



It is the responsibility of the property owner to undertake regular inspections to ensure adequate maintenance of their rainwater tank to avoid adverse impacts to the property owner, surrounding community and environment. Notwithstanding the structural integrity of the tank, such maintenance can include installation of devices to assist in ensuring water quality (ie. Including gutter guards, mosquito and insect screens, filters and backflow devices).



### **Overland flow stormwater complaint management**

Overland stormwater flow generally occurs as a result of the natural contours of sloping land where surface water flows to the lowest point. It is the responsibility of the property owner constructing structures, garden beds, retaining walls and the like on their property to ensure it does not adversely affect adjoining properties and change the natural overflow path. Unresolved disputes between private property owners should be directed to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) to assist.

Council will investigate matters where overland flow has occurred as a result of defective roof drainage from a dwelling and structure. Where it finds reason to take further action, and has the legislative power to do so, action will be taken.

### **Further information**

The Queensland Development Code (QDC) can provide further information in relation to tanks:

- MP1.2 – Design and Siting Standards;
- MP 4.1 - Sustainable buildings.

The Queensland Health department ([www.health.qld.gov.au](http://www.health.qld.gov.au)) also provides information guidance on use of rainwater tanks and keeping your tank safe.