

Safe disposal of animal carcasses on Kangaroo Island

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EPA 1123/20: This information sheet provides assistance on how to safely dispose animal carcasses on farm without risking groundwater quality on Kangaroo Island.

Introduction

Due to the unique nature of groundwater systems on Kangaroo Island the following additional instructions have been provided to assist land holders and participating organisations with safe disposal. More information can be found in the EPA publication *On-farm disposal of animal carcasses*¹.

It should also be noted that carcasses can be disposed of direct to landfills which are licensed to receive and dispose of animal carcasses or putrescible waste however it should be noted that such landfills are only located on the mainland.

Instructions

The burial site should be located at least 250m from the nearest bore

When planning potential carcass burial sites, the information on the location of the nearest bore can be obtained from the following sources:

- local knowledge from the landholders and/or their neighbours
- government database on groundwater bores WaterConnect:
 - 1 Enter <https://www.waterconnect.sa.gov.au>
 - 2 On the main page, click ***I need to find information about wells, drillholes, bores***, to take you to *Groundwater Data*.
 - 3 Click ***NRM Region***, which is one of the tabs in the *Groundwater Data* section.
 - 4 Click ***Kangaroo Island*** from the dropdown menu labelled *NRM Region*.
 - 5 Add ***Map Layers*** from the drop down menu, eg *Hundreds, 100k Map Sheet*, to aid in finding the location.
 - 6 Use your computer mouse to zoom in for a closer-scale look at where bores are located.

¹ https://www.epa.sa.gov.au/files/7566_onfarm_disposal.pdf

The base of the trench should be at least 2 m above the water table

Identifying depth to watertable on Kangaroo Island can be difficult, unless shallow drilling is undertaken prior to breaking ground. The WaterConnect database does not provide the depth to the watertable, but shows the Standing Water Level (SWL) which indicates the pressure level within an individual aquifer. It is important to note that the SWL is very frequently different to the actual watertable depth.

On Kangaroo Island, shallow watertables are more likely to be located in the following areas:

- low-lying areas
- where there is a change of slope (ie where the lower end of sloping land meets flatter land)
- where there are surface indications of dryland salinity, eg seeps, bare areas, salt crusts (dryland salinity is caused by evaporation from shallow watertables).
- where soils are prone to waterlogging and these areas should be avoided for carcass burial pits.

These areas should be avoided for carcass burial pits.

Sites that are more likely to have no watertable or a greater depth to a watertable include:

- ridges
- upper slopes
- plateaus.

Ideally these types of locations should be targeted for carcass burial pits, as long as they meet the other criteria given in the general information sheet on carcass disposal², eg not near buildings, bores, dams, creeks.

Local knowledge will be vital to best identify the areas to avoid and the areas to target for carcass burial sites, and 1:50,000 topographic maps will also be of use, given that the preferred sites are higher up in the topographic landscape.

Further information

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² https://www.epa.sa.gov.au/files/7566_onfarm_disposal.pdf