

# Odour Control Units

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## What is an Odour Control Unit (OCU)?

### Why are they needed?

OCUs are a vital part of the sewer network as they allow ventilation and air filtration to protect the sewer pipes from corrosion. OCU ventilation extends the life of a sewer by reducing the amount of maintenance the pipeline needs, making management of the network much more efficient. The filters used in the OCU and ventilation stacks absorb gases such as hydrogen sulphide, which is a common source of odours from sewerage systems.

A typical OCU uses activated carbon to treat odour, and comprises the following major components:

- pipework and valving
- heater (dehumidifier)
- activated carbon bed
- fanhouse including monitoring equipment (duty/ standby fan)
- instrumentation
- discharge stack
- access road.

## Are there other OCUs in the ACT? Do they smell?

There are nine OCU facilities already in operation across the ACT, including at the following locations:

- Three at West Macgregor
- Commonwealth Avenue bridge
- Commonwealth Avenue pumping station
- Cotter Road
- Weston Oval
- Acton Siphon
- Kingston Foreshore Sewer Pump Station

They are designed to treat odours, so they do not smell.

## What does an OCU look like?

From the outside, OCUs can look very different. You probably drive past an OCU every day without noticing.

The proposed design of the OCUs for the Belconnen trunk sewer projects is a box shaped structure measuring 20 metres by 7 metres wide and 4.5 metres high with a 14 metre high ventilation stack located next to the main structure and a driveway for access.

The outside finish of the structures will be influenced by community feedback but could be finished in a neutral colour to help blend in to the surrounding environment. Other finishes may include indigenous artwork or other artwork.

Inside the unit there is ductwork to extract gas from the sewer. The gas is fed through an activated carbon filter to remove odour, and a ventilation stack releases the filtered air back out again.

## Maintenance requirements

The maintenance of an OCU during operation involves the following activities:

- replacement of the activated carbon filter media in the scrubber units – it is likely that replacement would need to occur annually, however this would vary depending on how much gas has been removed from the sewer
- replacement of pre-filters (located upstream of the scrubber unit) – it is likely that the pre-filter would need to be replaced annually, depending on air quality
- equipment checks – regular checks of equipment and seals to identify any replacements needed.

Localised external lighting may be installed to allow Icon Water staff to access the site after dark if required.

Overall, the maintenance requirements for an OCU are quite low.

