

# 28. Public and communal latrines

## Public and communal latrines

Public latrines are located at markets, lorry parks, bus stations and similar places where they are used by people who are away from their homes.

Communal latrines are located in or near housing areas, and are used by the community - people living in nearby houses who have no household latrines.



- **Design and construction of public and communal latrines is straightforward**
- **Operation and maintenance are usually difficult**

Therefore ...

before starting to build a public or communal latrine there must be clear plans ...

- for cleaning and operation
- for the wages of any paid staff
- for paying any water and electricity charges
- for maintenance and repairs
- for proper management and control

# Design and construction

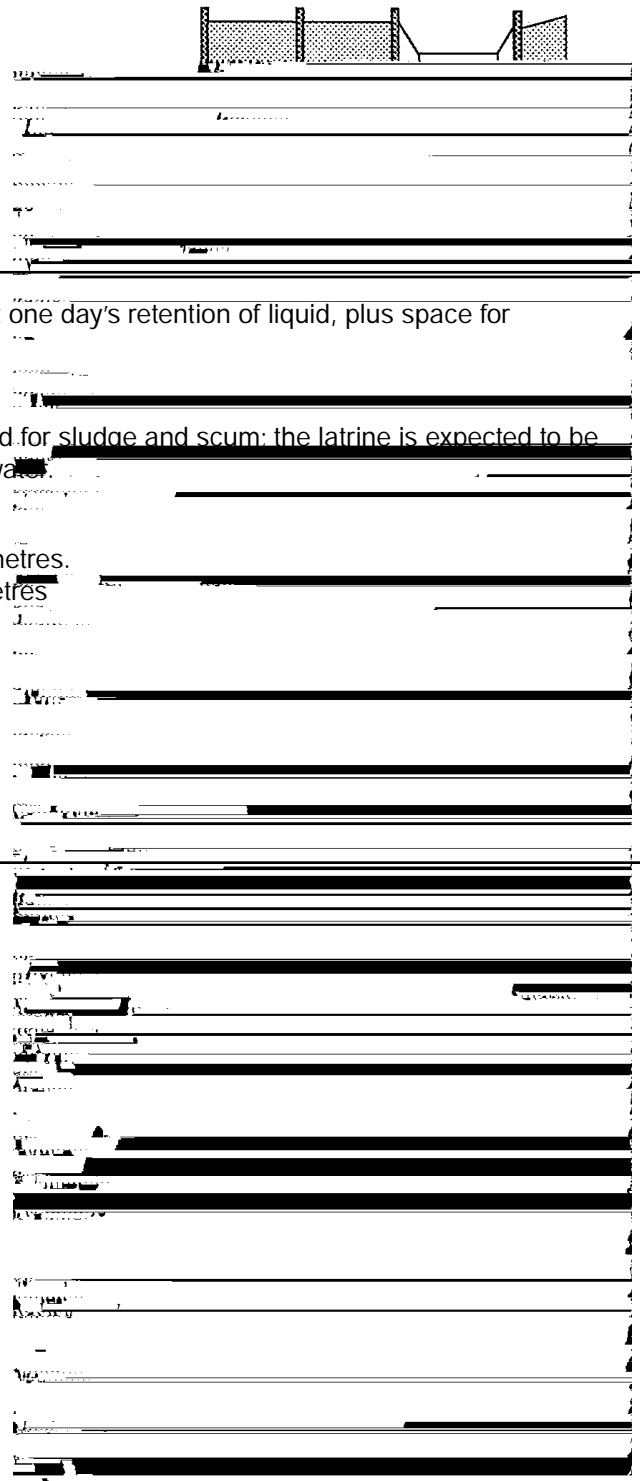
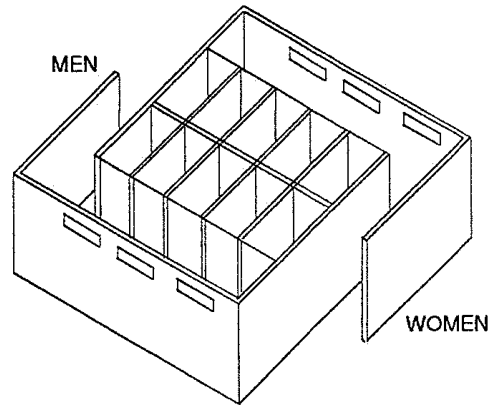
Separate facilities for men and women should always be provided.

Exceptionally, a single special toilet for disabled people (those using wheel-chairs) may be used by men and women.

Public or communal latrines are usually of the same type as the household toilets nearby.

Where an ample and reliable piped water supply is available, WATER CLOSETS are appropriate.

Water closets may be connected to sewers, or to septic tanks where there is no sewerage.



The capacity for a septic tank should be sufficient for at least one day's retention of liquid, plus space for accumulation of sludge and scum.

For example, assuming: half the volume of the tank is allowed for sludge and scum: the latrine is expected to be used 1000 times each day; each WC flush uses 10 litres of water.

The tank volume required is  $2 \times 1000 \times 10$  litres = 20 cubic metres.  
For a depth of two metres, the area required is 10 square metres

For a two-compartment tank, the dimensions could be:

An **aqua privy latrine** (sometimes called a 'septic tank latrine') has the latrine above the tank. A vertical pipe is set below each toilet and extends below the water surface.

This type of latrine is suitable where water supply is limited or where solid material is used for anal cleansing.

Where water has to be carried to the latrine (for example, from a public standpost) facilities for bathing and/or washing clothes may be provided to keep a flow of water

## Pit latrines

*Either:*

### A VENTILATED IMPROVED PIT LATRINE (VIP)

with darkened interior for the toilet cubicles, and adequate vent pipe (see note below) with fly proof netting.

*Or:*

### A POUR- FLUSH LATRINE

with a trap below each toilet bowl providing a 20mm deep water seal.

*Or:*

### ALTERNATING TWIN-PIT LATRINES

for example, the K-VIP shown here.

The number of pits or pit compartments should be one more than the number of toilet cubicles.

For the first two years or so:

Toilet A goes to compartment 1

Toilets B and C go to compartment 3

Toilet D goes to compartment 5.

For the next two years or so:

Toilets A and B go to compartment 2

Toilets C and D go to compartment 4.

Then compartments 1,3 and 5 are emptied and used again.

**Note:**

*Vent pipes should be at least: 150mm diameter if a smooth pipe (e.g. PVC)*

*225mm diameter if a rough pipe (e.g. mud)*

*225mm square if made of blocks or bricks*

# Cleaning