

15A NCAC 18A .1961 MAINTENANCE OF SEWAGE SYSTEMS

(a) Any person owning or controlling the property upon which a ground absorption sewage treatment and disposal system is installed shall be responsible for the following items regarding the maintenance of the system:

- (1) Ground absorption sewage treatment and disposal systems shall be operated and maintained to prevent the following conditions:
 - (A) a discharge of sewage or effluent to the surface of the ground, the surface waters, or directly into groundwater at any time; or
 - (B) a back-up of sewage or effluent into the facility, building drains, collection system, or freeboard volume of the tanks; or
 - (C) a free liquid surface within three inches of finished grade over the nitrification trench for two or more observations made not less than 24 hours apart. Observations shall be made greater than 24 hours after a rainfall event.

The system shall be considered to be malfunctioning when it fails to meet one or more of these requirements, either continuously or intermittently, or if it is necessary to remove the contents of the tank(s) at a frequency greater than once per month in order to satisfy the conditions of Parts (A), (B), or (C) of this Paragraph. Legal remedies may be pursued after an authorized agent has observed and documented one or more of the malfunctioning conditions and has issued a notice of violation.

- (2) Ground absorption sewage treatment and disposal systems shall be checked, and the contents of the septic tank removed, periodically from all compartments, to ensure proper operation of the system. The contents shall be pumped whenever the solids level is found to be more than 1/3 of the liquid depth in any compartment.
- (b) System management in accordance with Tables V(a) and V(b) of this Rule shall be required for all systems installed or repaired after July 1, 1992. After July 1, 1992, system management in accordance with Tables V(a) and V(b) shall be required for all existing Type V and Type VI systems.
- (c) No Improvement Permit or Construction Authorization shall be issued for Type IV, Type V, or Type VI systems, unless a management entity of the type specified in Table V(b) is specifically authorized, funded, and operational to carry out this management program in the service area where the proposed system is to be located.
- (d) A local health department may be the public management entity only for systems classified Type IV, V(a) and V(b) and only when specifically authorized by resolution of the local board of health.
- (e) A contract shall be executed between the system owner and a management entity prior to the issuance of an Operation Permit for a system required to be maintained by a public or private management entity, unless the system owner and certified operator are the same. The contract shall include the specific requirements for maintenance and operation, responsibilities of the owner and system operator, provisions that the contract shall be in effect for as long as the system is in use, and other requirements for the continued proper performance of the system. It shall also be a condition of the Operation Permit that subsequent owners of the system execute such a contract.
- (f) Inspections of the system shall be performed by a management entity at the frequency specified in Table V(b). The management entity shall report the results of their inspections to the local health department at the specified reporting frequency. However, where inspections indicate the need for system repairs, the management entity shall notify the local health department within 48 hours in order to obtain a Construction Authorization for the repairs.
- (g) The management entity shall be responsible for assuring routine maintenance procedures and monitoring requirements in accordance with the conditions of the Operation Permit and the contract.
- (h) Sewage systems with multiple components shall be classified by their highest or most complex system type in accordance with Table V to determine local health department and management entity responsibilities.
- (i) Sewage systems not identified in this Rule shall be classified by the Division of Environmental Health after consultation with the appropriate commission governing operators of pollution control facilities.
- (j) The local health department shall routinely review the performance and operation reports submitted in accordance with Table V(b) of this Rule and shall perform an on-site inspection of the systems as required in Table V(a).
- (k) The certified operator shall hold a valid and current certificate from the appropriate commission, and nothing in this Section shall preclude any requirements for system operators, in accordance with Article 3 of G.S. 90A.

TABLE V(a)

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

System Classification	System Description	Permits Required	Minimum System Review Frequency
Type I	a. Privy b. Chemical toilet c. Incinerating toilet d. Other toilet system e. Grease trap	Improvement Permit, Construction Authorization, and Operation Permit	N/A
Type II	a. Conventional septic system (single-family or 480 GPD or less) b. Conventional septic system with 750 linear feet of nitrification line or less c. Conventional system with shallow placement	Improvement Permit, Construction Authorization, and Operation Permit	N/A
Type III	a. Conventional septic system > 480 GPD (excluding single-family residence) b. Septic system with single effluent pump or siphon c. Gravity fill system d. Dual gravity field system e. PPBPS system, gravity dosed f. Large diameter pipe system g. Other non-conventional trench systems	Improvement Permit, Construction Authorization, and Operation Permit	5 yrs. (IIIb only)
Type IV	a. Any system with LPP distribution b. System with more than 1 pump or siphon	Improvement Permit, Construction Authorization, and Operation Permit	3 yrs.
Type V	a. Sand filter pretreatment system b. Any > 3,000-GPD septic tank system with a nitrification field designed for > 1500 GPD c. Aerobic Treatment Unit (ATU) d. Other mechanical, biological, or chemical pretreatment plant (< 3000 GPD)	Improvement Permit, Construction Authorization, and Operation Permit	12 mos.
Type VI	a. Any > 3,000 GPD system with mechanical, biological, or chemical pretreatment system plant b. Wastewater reuse/recycle	Improvement Permit, Construction Authorization, and Operation Permit	6 mos.

TABLE V(b)

MANAGEMENT ENTITY RESPONSIBILITIES

System Classification	Management Entity	Minimum System Inspection/Maintenance Frequency	Reporting Frequency
Type I	Owner	N/A	N/A
Type II	Owner	N/A	N/A
Type III	Owner	N/A	N/A
Type IV	Public Management Entity with a Certified Operator or a private Certified Operator	2/yr.	12 mos.
Type V	Public Management Entity With a Certified Operator or a private Certified Operator	a. 2/yr (0-1500 GPD) 4/yr (1500-3000 GPD) 12/yr (3000-10000 GPD) 1/wk (> 10000 GPD) b. 12/yr (3000-10000 GPD) 1/wk (> 10000 GPD) c. 4/yr. d. 12/yr.	6 mos.
Type VI	Public Management Entity With a Certified Operator	a. 1/wk(3000-10000 GPD) 2/wk(10000-25000 GPD) 3/wk(25000-50000 GPD) 5/wk(> 75000 GPD) b. 12/yr.	3 mos.

(l) A sewage collection, treatment, and disposal system that creates or has created a public health hazard or nuisance by surfacing of effluent or discharge directly into groundwater or surface waters, or that is partially or totally destroyed shall be repaired within 30 days of notification by the state or local health department unless the notification otherwise specifies a repair period in writing. If a system described in the preceding sentence has for any reason been disconnected, the system shall be repaired prior to reuse. The state or local health department shall use its best professional judgement in requiring repairs that will reasonably enable the system to function properly. If, for any reason, a sewage collection, treatment, and disposal system is found to be nonrepairable, or is no longer required, the system shall not be used, and may be required to have any contents removed, collapse any components and backfill, or otherwise secured as directed by the authorized agent to protect the public health and safety.

(m) When necessary to protect the public health, the state or local health department may require the owner or controller of a malfunctioning system to pump and haul sewage to an approved wastewater system during the time needed to repair the system.

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