

Stark County Health Department

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REPAIR / REPLACEMENT SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEM (STS) PROCEDURES

The need for a repair evaluation is typically initiated by a complaint investigation, an operation inspection, a property transfer inspection, or a property owner requesting to upgrade his/her system.

To initiate a visit by a sanitarian, the owner or installer may contact the Health Department at (330)493-9904; request to speak to the sanitarian that services the township where the property is located. A property owner may also request a list of STS installers for consultation.

The sanitarian will do an on-site review at an agreed upon time and date. In many cases it will be determined that soil test holes are necessary. The benefit of working with an installer from the beginning is that they can typically gauge whether or not test holes are necessary, which saves time in determining the type of sewage system that will be needed at the property.

There are two basic types of systems used for replacement. They are called “on-lot” and “off-lot” discharge. On-lot systems use the soil to dissipate effluent, whereas off-lot systems treat effluent to a high level and release it off of the property into a stream, culvert, or road-side ditch. State law prohibits the use of off-lot systems when an on-lot alternative is available. Soil test holes are used to either determine the type and size of an on-lot system or to simply rule it out. In some cases, the lot size alone is enough to determine that an on-lot system is not feasible, and test holes are not necessary.

After the site visit, (and test holes if necessary), the sanitarian will determine the system parameters. The owner must then contact an installer, to initiate a design plan. Some installers will draw the plan themselves, while others utilize a third-party designer.

In the case of off-lot discharge, while the design plan is being completed the owner must submit a permit application and a fee to the Ohio EPA to discharge treated effluent to the Waters of the State. This is called an NPDES permit. The Health Department fills the majority of the form out and turns it over to the property owner for signature and submission. A permit cannot be issued by the Health Department until Ohio EPA approves the NPDES permit. They will send a notice that the permit is approved to the applicant, as well as the Health Department.

Once the design plan is submitted, reviewed, and approved, the owner can obtain estimates and an installation permit. The permit can be issued to either the property owner or installer. *(REMEMBER: If off-lot discharge is necessary, the NPDES permit must also be approved by the Ohio EPA prior to the installation permit issuance.)*

Also note that plumbing changes may be necessary to insure that the kitchen, laundry, basement drainage and bath water enter the septic system, while “clean” water, such as footers, down-spouts, and water softeners do not.

Upon completion of work, and prior to covering, the registered installer will contact the Health Department for an inspection.