

Chapter 7. ~~Operation and Maintenance Guidance for Alternative Systems~~ Complaint Investigation and Enforcement

7.1 ~~Extended Treatment Package System Operation and Maintenance~~

Revision: April 24, 2000

~~Operation and maintenance tasks must follow those recommended by the manufacturer.~~

7.2 ~~Lagoon Operation and Maintenance~~

~~The lagoon must be kept filled with at least 2 feet of liquid. A supply of makeup water shall be available. If the water comes from a well or domestic water supply, an approved backflow prevention device must be installed between the water source and the discharge to the lagoon.~~

~~Embankments must be stable and maintained to avoid breach, overflow, aesthetic nuisance, or disturbance to the lagoon operation. Permanent vegetation shall be maintained on the top and outer slopes of the embankment except where a foot or vehicle path is in use. Grasses should be mowed.~~

~~Weeds and other vegetation must not be allowed to grow in the lagoon.~~

~~Duckweed or other floating aquatic weeds must be physically removed when the vegetation obscures the surface of the liquid.~~

~~The fence and all gates must be maintained to exclude animals, children, and other unwanted intrusion.~~

7.3 ~~Sand Filter Operation and Maintenance~~

~~Operations and maintenance tasks for sand filters should be specified on the permit.~~

~~Conventional sand filters, or sand filters of comparable operation and maintenance are the responsibility of the system owner.~~

~~Permits may not be issued for a sand filter that, in the judgment of the Director, would require operation and maintenance significantly greater than conventional sand filters, unless operation and maintenance arrangements for system O&M meeting the Director's approval are secured. Filters with special approvals should be inspected every 12 months and checked for necessary corrective maintenance.~~

~~The owner of any sand filter system must provide the Department written verification that the system's septic tank has been pumped annually from the date of installation by an approved septic tank pumping business.~~

~~The service start date shall be assumed as the installation date.~~

~~The owner must provide the Director with certification of tank pumping within 2 months of the date required for pumping.~~

7.4 Sand Mound Operation and Maintenance

~~The Director may require that a management entity be responsible for sand mound operation and maintenance. Such independent management is particularly important for large systems, i.e., systems with more than nine connections or more than 2,500 gallons of sewage per day. Refer to section 4.2 for guidelines on Nonprofit Corporations for Managing Small or Subsurface Wastewater Flow Systems.~~

~~The Director may require that operation and maintenance records, including results of ground water and system test results, are submitted annually.~~

~~Alarm systems should be inspected monthly for proper operation.~~

~~Sludge depth in the septic tank should be checked annually and the tank shall be pumped when the sludge exceeds 40% of the liquid depth.~~

~~The mound must be maintained free of vehicular traffic, livestock, and other compaction or disruptive activity. The toe area of the mound is extremely sensitive to compaction and must particularly be protected. Maintenance of grasses and shallow-rooted perennials on the mound is recommended.~~

7.57.1 Open Sewage Complaint Investigation Protocol

Revision: ~~September 12, 2008~~ April 18, 2013

~~Record~~ Pertinent information ~~must be recorded~~ from the complainant ~~to conduct~~ so an initial investigation ~~can be conducted~~ (i.e., name, address, and phone number of property owner and complainant and the nature of the complaint). Health district staff will investigate open sewage complaints stemming from subsurface sewage disposal systems. DEQ will investigate open sewage complaints regarding public wastewater treatment systems (i.e., collection, pumping, treatment, etc.).

Gather the following equipment and prepare for investigation:

- Camera
 - Dye (tablets or liquid)
 - Notify laboratory of possibility for coliform density tests
 - Sample bottles, whirl packs, sterilized equipment, and laboratory sample forms.
 - Ice chest and ice
 - Disposable gloves
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Go to the property, notify owners of the complaint, and conduct a complaint investigation. If the complaint is unfounded, notify the complainant of findings. If the open sewage complaint is valid:

1. Take pictures of any open sewage or evidence of wastewater.
2. Dye trace household plumbing if necessary to identify wastewater discharge location.
3. Collect samples of sewage.
4. Collect samples of surface water if directly discharged to water.
5. Place samples in ice chest and transport to laboratory.
6. Post primary and secondary contact recreational waters with open sewage notice until water sample results can be obtained.
7. Issue Notice of Violation (NOV) directly to property owner or send notice via certified mail. Establish time frames for obtaining a replacement system permit (~~7~~15 days), for system installation (30 days) and any corrective actions necessary to mitigate the public health hazard of the open sewage (items 8 and 9, immediate action).

~~7~~8. Carbon copy the county prosecutor with the NOV letter.

~~8~~9. Require the septic tank(s) to be pumped on a daily basis, if necessary, with documentation sent to the health district office.

~~9~~10. Require open sewage to be covered with soil. If property owner is unable to cover sewage with soil require the property owner to spread lime on top of open sewage.

~~10~~11. Track property owner activity regarding compliance with NOV and any issued permit.

~~11~~12. If the property owner fails to comply with the NOV file a complaint with the county prosecutor and ask the prosecutor to issue a citation against the property owner. Prepare case for court hearing.

~~12~~13. Follow court's judgment, or hearing findings.
