

For More Information

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

1410 N. Hilton

Boise, ID 83706

(208) 373-0502

www.deq.idaho.gov

www.deq.idaho.gov/water-quality/wastewater/septic-systems.aspx

www.deq.idaho.gov/technical-guidance-manual

www.deq.idaho.gov/extended-treatment-package-systems

US Environmental Protection Agency

http://www.epa.gov/owm/septic/pubs/aerobic_treatment.pdf

Idaho Public Health Districts

Panhandle Health District

8500 N. Atlas Road

Hayden, ID 83835

(208) 415-5100

www.phd1.idaho.gov

North Central Health District

215 10th Street

Lewiston, ID 83501

(208) 799-3100

idahopublichealth.com

Southwest District Health

13307 Miami Lane

Caldwell, ID 83607

(208) 454-7722

www.publichealthidaho.com

Central District Health Department

707 North Armstrong Place

Boise, ID 83704

(208) 375-5211

www.cdhd.idaho.gov

South Central Public Health District

1020 Washington Street North

Twin Falls, ID 83301

(208) 734-5900

www.phd5.idaho.gov

Southeastern Idaho Public Health

1901 Alvin Ricken Drive

Pocatello, ID 83201

(208) 233-9080

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Eastern Idaho Public Health District

1250 Hollipark Drive

Idaho Falls, ID 83401

(208) 522-0310

www.phd7.idaho.gov

Extended Treatment Package System Maintenance:

What You Need to Know



For system owners, real estate professionals, and developers



Idaho Department of
Environmental Quality
www.deq.idaho.gov



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Maintenance Needs

Extended treatment package systems (ETPSs) are small packaged mechanical plants used to treat septic tank effluent. Due to the mechanical components and need to maintain proper biological growth within the unit to achieve effluent treatment, the maintenance needs of an ETPS are greater than that of a standard septic tank. Proper function of an ETPS unit relies on regular maintenance.

ETPS units are used in Idaho to achieve a higher quality of wastewater effluent than what is produced in a standard septic tank. The higher quality of wastewater is necessary to protect sensitive environmental areas and ensure proper function of the system's drainfield due to limiting site and soil conditions. To ensure this effluent quality is met, DEQ requires that annual operation, maintenance, monitoring, and reporting be performed for ETPS units as a requirement of the ETPS owner's septic permit.

Maintenance Providers

Annual operation, maintenance, monitoring, and typically reporting are performed by an ETPS owner's operation and maintenance (O&M) entity. For more information on the O&M entity relationship to the property owner, see DEQ's brochure *Extended Treatment Package Systems: What You Need to Know*. The O&M entity contracts with one or more service providers to perform the annual operation, maintenance, and monitoring services for their members. To obtain a septic permit for an ETPS, a property owner must supply a signed and recorded member agreement with an approved O&M entity as part of the septic permit application.

The service providers are trained through the O&M entity that contracts them to service, maintain, and sample the entity member's ETPS units. Service provider training is performed through a manufacturer-certified training program. Personnel, including septic tank pumpers, which are not contracted with a member's O&M entity should not service, maintain, or sample the ETPS unit in any way.

ETPS Household Practices

Homeowners will impact the function of the ETPS unit through their daily activities. System owners should consult with their O&M entity or service provider regarding water use habits and household practices that will impact the function of their ETPS unit. ETPS units and their associated biological growth are sensitive to system modifications and system use.

The guidelines provided below will help to ensure proper functioning of your ETPS

DO:

- Use soaps and detergents that are low-suds, biodegradable, and low- or phosphate-free.
- Use low-flow water fixtures.
- Fix leaky fixtures.
- Destroy and dispose of unused medication in the garbage.
- Limit the volume of household cleaners and chemicals that are washed down the drain.
- Keep the air supply device running.
- Pump the septic tank regularly (every 3-5 years).

- Spread laundry loads throughout the week.
- Substitute liquid fabric softener with dryer sheets.
- Inform your O&M entity or service provider of medications in use at the house prior to any service visits.

DO NOT:

- Turn off any air supply device or electrical component of the system.
- Modify, cover, or move any system components without prior approval from the O&M entity or service provider.
- Pump the ETPS unit without O&M entity or service provider approval/supervision.
- Place food wastes, personal care products, chemicals/toxins, unused medication, or garbage down the drain.
- Dump fat, oil, or grease down the drain.
- Use antibacterial soaps.

Most membership fees for an O&M entity do not cover additional operation and maintenance visits, additional effluent testing, or any replacement parts. Homeowner care and proper use of the ETPS unit will reduce maintenance and monitoring costs.