

## **Section 14 Non-Standard and/or Commercial OWTS Operational Permit and Monitoring**

- A. All non-standard and commercial OWTS that meet applicable criteria of Sections 11 (Commercial), 12 (Experimental) or 13 (Alternative) require the issuance and possession of valid operational permits pursuant to Sonoma County Code Sections 24-33 and 34.
  - 1. Applications to construct standard OWTS must be accompanied by applications and fees for operational permits.
  - 2. Operational permits are transferable subject to an ownership transfer fee.
  - 3. An Operational Permit Easement Deed and Agreement is needed for the easement property serving the residence or business.
  - 4. A separate easement agreement to an operational permit OWTS easement agreement is required whenever a portion of the non-standard OWTS is located on a different parcel.
    - a. If a property changes ownership within 60 days of the issuance of the original operational permit, the permit may be transferred without additional fees. The anniversary date shall remain as per permit originally issued.
- B. A recorded easement agreement is required for all OWTS subject to this Section. The purpose of easement agreements is to allow Permit Sonoma staff and associates, and/or the RWQCB onto the properties to monitor and test the non-standard OWTS.
  - 1. Primary and reserve test areas for non-standard OWTS are required to have the Standard easement agreement recorded against the parcel before issuance of the sewage dispersal permit.
  - 2. Easement agreements may not be removed from the title of the property unless authorized in writing by the Permit Authority.
- C. Monitoring forms will be provided by Permit Authority staff to the property owner 2 times per year for recording information regarding OWTS operation.
  - 1. Property owners shall complete the monitoring reports and submit them to the Permit Authority within 30 days of receipt.
  - 2. Failure to perform the self-monitoring program is cause for suspension of the operational permit.
  - 3. Failure to provide access to the system area when requests for access have been communicated to the property owner is cause for revocation.
- D. All Experimental or Alternative non-standard OWTS that include an approved Pretreatment Unit, permitted on or after the effective date of this OWTS manual are subject to inspection, maintenance and monitoring by an approved Service Provider for the life of the system.
  - 1. All non-standard OWTS permitted prior to the effective date of this OWTS manual will have the option of being permitted with an approved Service Provider, or remain as they are currently permitted.

2. A copy of a signed contract with the approved Service Provider, if applicable, and a completed maintenance and monitoring inspection report shall be submitted to the Permit Authority with any application for a change of ownership.
  3. Once a Service Provider is hired or upon change of ownership, the non-standard OWTS with a pretreatment unit will be required to have a Service Provider for the remaining life of the system.
  4. All non-standard systems with TCOM/VCOM panels must have a qualified Service Provider for the life of the system.
- E. All non-standard OWTS must be designed with a series of performance wells to sample for potential subsurface groundwater degradation. Performance wells are strategically placed up gradient, laterally, down gradient and within most non-standard OWTS.
- F. The Permit Authority may occasionally sample performance wells for total coliform bacteria, fecal coliform bacteria, and nitrates as indicators of the degree of sewage treatment and function of non-standard OWTS. The following are limits of maximum contaminant levels to analyze degree and function of non-standard sewage dispersal systems.
- G. Any non-standard OWTS that causes sewage to surface or discharge at ground level, or any tank exfiltrating wastewater or infiltrating groundwater, is considered a failing system, deemed to have an adverse effect on surface water and is considered a public health hazard. Such a system shall be immediately corrected or abated.
1. Sample results greater than 240,000 of the most probable number (MPN) total coliform bacteria and/or a fecal coliform count greater than 2.2 MPN exceeds the maximum contaminant levels and is deemed to have an adverse effect on subsurface water.
    - a. Such level of contamination as sampled from any purged performance well located 25 feet or greater down gradient from the dispersal field indicates a failing system.
    - b. Failing systems shall be corrected or abated.
  2. Sample results exceeding 3,000 MPN but less than 240,000 MPN total coliform and/or less than 2.2 MPN fecal coliform, do not exceed the maximum contaminant levels (MCLs). However, these results define a non-standard OWTS as operating marginally.
    - a. The contaminant levels are results of samples that have been taken from any purged monitoring well located 25 feet down gradient from the dispersal field.
    - b. For the purpose of the Annual Monitoring Report, OWTS that show ponding of effluent within 12 inches of trench bottom (but do not exceed MCLs mentioned above) are defined as operating marginally.
- H. The RWQCB requires the Permit Authority to monitor the operation and maintenance of all non-standard OWTS.
1. Inspection frequency is generally based upon 1 inspection per year.
    - a. The Permit Authority shall submit results of the monitoring inspections to the RWQCB in the form of an annual report for each calendar year.
    - b. The Permit Authority shall notify the RWQCB in writing whenever the monitoring program is inadequately staffed.