

Section 21 Waterless Toilets

21.1 Purpose

- A. Many properties in Sonoma County have site constraints – lot size, topography, soil type - that make existing system compliance with OWTS standards difficult.
- B. Composting, incineration and other technologies can supplement OWTS operations and extend their use under certain circumstances and appropriate monitoring.
- C. A waterless toilet (WT) that complies with this section may augment an existing OWTS in a manner that affords better compliance with the objectives of OWTS regulation.
- D. Since the composting process does not eliminate pathogens such as viruses, protozoans, and helminths, this section establishes conditions under which a WT can be considered as an augmentation to and not as a substitute for an existing OWTS to further the objective of OWTS regulation.
- E. The installation, use and maintenance of WT's must occur in a manner that protects public health and the environment and does not create a public nuisance.

21.2 Use Standards

- A. Waterless toilets may be included in an existing or new OWTS to serve existing or new development.
- B. Waterless toilets are not authorized for the following types of development:
 - 1. Increases in wastewater flow and/or increase in strength for existing uses;
 - 2. Flow rates of 600 gallons per day or more for new single family homes;
 - 3. Flow rates of 1,000 gallons per day or more for new commercial establishments;
 - 4. Subdivision of land.
 - 5. Properties within a sewer hookup area, septic tank ban area, or County identified Variance Prohibition Areas, except as a replacement; and
 - 6. Vacation rental properties.

21.3 Development Standards

- A. A waterless toilet shall meet National Science Foundation (NSF 41) criteria and shall be NSF certified and have the NSF seal.
- B. The product of composting toilets qualifies under federal regulation 40CFR503 as a biosolid which is also categorized as sewage sludge and must be handled and disposed of by a licensed septage hauler.
- C. The waste product of the incinerator toilet must be transported or disposed of in a manner that does not create a public nuisance and is in accordance with the requirements of the OM&M manual.

- D. The owner must maintain the waterless toilet in accordance with the OM&M manual and comply with all of the special permit conditions.
- E. No material shall be placed in a waterless toilet other than the material for which it has been designed.
- F. The waste product of the waterless toilet shall only be handled and disposed of after the digestion process is complete as specified in the manufacturer's instructions.
- G. The waste product of a composting toilet shall be hauled off-site to an approved location by a licensed and certified hauler by the Sonoma County Environmental Health Department. A contract with a licensed / certified hauler is required.
- H. The composting process has not been proven to eliminate all pathogens such as but not limited to viruses, protozoans, helminths and therefore the handling of the compost material shall be done with protective sanitation measures and should include the use of disposable gloves, handwashing with soap and hot water.
- I. A waterless toilet shall be capable of reliably performing decomposition, settling or solids separation, nutrient and pathogen reduction, and avoidance of nuisance conditions. Features to be evaluated include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Time and temperature control;
 - 2. Solids mixing or turning ability;
 - 3. Liquid fraction separation;
 - 4. Sizing and storage capacity for solids;
 - 5. Composting residence time;
 - 6. Ventilation;
 - 7. Electrical and or mechanical components;
 - 8. Piping;
 - 9. Aerobic conditions;
 - 10. Moisture content;
 - 11. Required additives;
 - 12. Operation and maintenance;
 - 13. Vector controls.
- J. A notice shall be placed on the property deed that states there is a waterless toilet that serves the structures or structures and the owners of said property are required to be in the waterless toilet monitoring program. The owner shall maintain the provisions required in the special permit.

21.4 Administration

- A. Sonoma County Code Section 7-13(G)(2) requires water flush toilets for every dwelling or other building where persons congregate, reside or are employed. OWTS Manual Section 21 shall not be effective until SCC Section 7-13(G)(2) is amended to allow waterless toilets.
- B. A special permit is required for use of a WT. The owner must renew the special permit on an annual basis.
- C. A person or company shall make a building permit application requesting the specific design to be installed.
- D. For composting toilets, the person or company shall make an application requesting to be entered into a composting toilet monitoring program.
- E. The application contents shall include:
 - 1. Name and address of applicant.
 - 2. Manufacturer's name and model number.
 - 3. Manufacturer's NSF listing and certification.
 - 4. Manufacturer's recommended operational capacity.
 - 5. Technology description and technical details to satisfy Section 12.2.B.
 - 6. For composting toilets, the name and business address of the licensed/certified hauler under contract.
 - 7. Discussion of specific operational requirements and/or operational training needed to successfully operate the proposed unit.
 - 8. Operation and maintenance manual.
 - 9. The appropriate filing fee.

