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Environmental Health Division

Alternative On-Site Septic System Operation Permit Requirements

Most homes in the unincorporated area of Solano County have an on-site sewage disposal system, also known as a septic system, to dispose of their liquid waste. Septic systems require routine maintenance to operate properly. Unlike community sewers that have district employees to maintain the system, maintenance of the septic system is the responsibility of the homeowner. Because of site conditions on a property, some homes have advanced septic systems known as **alternative or engineered septic systems** to dispose of their liquid waste in a manner that is safe and environmentally protective.

Alternative septic systems may have pumps, filters, secondary-treatment units, and other specialized components not found in standard septic systems, which require more frequent and thorough maintenance to operate properly. For this reason, Solano County Code requires that alternative septic systems be maintained on a yearly basis and that a registered consultant or licensed contractor provide service to the system at least once every three years. The county code section is presented below.

Sec. 6.4-56. Operation permits.

- (b) An alternative system shall be operated, maintained, and monitored pursuant to the requirements of these standards and the operation permit. Under terms of the operation permit, Division personnel shall conduct annual review of the performance and condition of the system. This review may include on-site inspections, sampling, review of submitted maintenance and sampling reports, and other activity deemed necessary to assure the proper maintenance and operation of the system. The operation permit shall also require maintenance and performance monitoring to be performed by the property owner or property owner's agent, a licensed contractor or registered consultant at a frequency of once per year or more often as determined by the Environmental Health Services Division. At least once every three years the maintenance and performance monitoring shall be performed by a registered consultant or licensed contractor with knowledge of on-site systems. At least one monitoring event shall occur during the wet weather testing period as defined in section 6.4-81.2(f) of these standards. All data collected must be submitted to the Environmental Health Services Division within thirty (30) days.
- (c) The operation of the permit shall be renewed annually and any required fees shall be paid. The owner of the property shall keep the operation permit valid for the life of the system.

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