



Defiance County General Health District

1300 East Second Street, Suite 100, Defiance, Ohio 43512

Phone 419-784-3818 Fax 419-782-4979

www.defiancecohealth.org

April 28, 2023

RE: Application to Operate a Sewage Treatment System

****Application Deadline - June 30, 2023****

Please find enclosed the renewal application for the Sewage Treatment System (STS) Operation Permit.

This letter is to inform you, as the owner of an STS in Defiance, Noble or Richland Township, the application for your operation permit renewal by **June 30, 2023**.

Operation permits are valid for four years (through June 30, 2027). At some time during the four-year permit period, the property owner must have the **tank pumped or an inspection completed**. Written documentation from a Registered Hauler (a company that pumps and inspects tanks) or Service Provider (a company that inspects the system) must be provided to the health district.

Included with this letter is the Operation Permit application, terms and conditions and a pump schedule. Please complete and return the application with payment on the pre-addressed envelope (*you must add postage*) by **June 30, 2023**. Once the payment and application are received, the DCGHD will mail an Operation Permit letter to the mailing address provided on the application, along with educational information on maintaining sewage treatment systems.

Please fill out as much information as you can about the Sewage Treatment System. This information will help the department to provide advice to owners on the proper maintenance of the system and develop educational programs. You do not need to have the answers to all the questions before sending the application.

If you believe you have received this mailing in error

Or are not the current property owner, please contact the health district with your information. Make sure to include the address in question and a contact number.

If there is no STS at the property listed, complete the contact section of the form and check the "No sewage facilities ever installed" box. Return by mail, drop off at our office, or scan/email and department staff will contact you to confirm this information.

Aeration Tanks

To comply with the terms of the operation permit, the owner of a home or building with an aeration tank must maintain a Service Contract with a Registered Service Provider. The contract must include necessary maintenance required by the manufacturer to ensure proper function and prolong the life of the system. The owner must send a copy of the service contract to the health district. The Service Provider must send maintenance records to the health district and notify the district of any cancellations.

Buildings and sites where no sewage is being generated

As the district has gained experience it became apparent that sites that do not generate sewage, but have sewage or water facilities in place, will need to be handled differently. It is not always practical for these types of properties to have the tank pumped because leaving a tank empty can subject it to damage or cause other safety concerns.

Therefore the Board of Health has amended to rules to include the following terms and conditions.

“Abandoned Site” means a parcel that once contained a dwelling, building or other structure that has been razed, but contains a tank, cesspool or component that has not been properly abandoned.

“Abandoned Structure” means a dwelling, building or other structure that is not fit for human occupation, is not being rented, occupied or advertised for rent, and is generating no sewage or gray water, but contains a tank, cesspool, or component that has not been properly abandoned.

“Unused site” means a site where an STS or GRWS has been partially or fully installed, where no structure has yet been built.

“Unused structure” means a dwelling, building or other structure that is fit for human occupation, but is not being rented, occupied or advertised for rent, and is not generating no sewage or gray water, but contains a tank, cesspool or component, that has not been properly abandoned.

Tanks at **abandoned sites**, **abandoned structures**, and **unused sites** where no sewage is being generated, do not need to follow the pumping schedule to meet the permit requirements. The tank only needs to be inspected for safety only.

Tanks serving **unused structures** must be pumped per the pumping schedule prior to the structure being occupied or sold. Tanks must be maintained watertight and safe. Tanks that are not watertight (as evidenced by leakage or flooding) or safe must be repaired or abandoned.

To be removed from the operation permit requirement, a dwelling, building or other structure must be **connected to a sanitary sewer system or the owner must obtain an abandonment permit** and provide evidence to the district that the system was properly abandoned. Any STS or water system must be properly abandoned per OAC 3701-29 or 3701-28.

Where to get information

Website: On the health districts website “defiancecohealth.org” you can find:

- Health District supplement to the Ohio Sewage Treatment System Rules
- Registered Contractor Lists
- Historical information about the types of systems installed in the county
- Homeowner education
- Permit applications and inspection forms

Email: Or contact the sewage program staff at myseptic@defiancecohealth.org for any of the above or for a copy of your property records.

Mail, Phone or In-person: If you don’t use the internet, information requests can be fulfilled by mail (please include a phone number in case we need clarification on your request), phone (419-784-3818) or in person.

Only the application and fee must be submitted by June 30, 2023. An inspection or pumping action deadline is no later than June 30, 2027.

If you feel you cannot pay the entire amount, contact the department at the above address or phone to ask about a payment plan.

- Permits are transferrable upon the sale of the property for which the permit was issued.
- Please contact district staff by email at myseptic@defiancecohealth.org or by phone at 419-784-3818 with any questions you may have about how to complete the application.
- Homeowners can register to perform an inspection of their own system. There is required training – available online, as well as in-person. See defiancecohealth.org/myseptic for details and to register. In-person training dates will be announced via our social media accounts.

A septic or aeration tank shall be pumped when any of the following occur:

1. The total depth of scum layer plus sludge layer in the inlet chamber is equal to or greater than 30% of the chamber depth;
 2. The bottom of the scum layer is less than 3 inches from the bottom of the chamber baffle or outlet.
 3. The top of the sludge layer is less than 12 inches from the bottom of the chamber baffle or outlet.
- These measurements are valid when the outlet is fitted with a vented tee, vented ell, or baffle, which extends not less than six (6) inches above and not less than eighteen (18) inches below the liquid level of the chamber.

Or according to the schedule below:

Tank size gallons	Household size - Number of Occupants									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Septic Tank Service Frequency in Years									
250	2.9	1.3	0.75	0.5	0.25	0.14	0.12	0.10	0.09	0.08
500	5.8	2.6	1.5	1	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.05
750	9.1	4.2	2.6	1.8	1.3	1	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.3
900	11	5.2	3.3	2.3	1.7	1.3	1	0.8	0.7	0.5
1000	12.4	5.9	3.7	2.6	2	1.5	1.2	1	0.8	0.7
1250	15.6	7.5	4.8	3.4	2.6	2	1.7	1.4	1.2	1
1500	18.9	9.1	5.9	4.2	3.3	2.6	2.1	1.8	1.5	1.3
1750	22.1	10.7	6.9	5	3.9	3.1	2.6	2.2	1.9	1.6
2000	25.4	12.4	8	5.9	4.5	3.7	3.1	2.6	2.2	2
2250	28.6	14	9.1	6.7	5.2	4.2	3.5	3	2.6	2.3
2500	30.9	15.6	10.2	7.5	5.9	4.8	4	3.5	3	2.6

Be on the lookout for these System Killers

1. **Roots** can clog drain lines and break septic tanks in half. Even roots from distant trees and plants will seek moisture around leaking septic tanks and drain fields. While unnoticed at first, they can quickly lead to catastrophic failure. Owners can ensure that roots are not becoming a problem by having tanks cleaned and inspected on a regular basis and by locating drain lines before planting trees.
2. **Driving vehicles over the tank or leach field areas.** The heavier the vehicle the worse the damage, but we have seen cases where something as small as a dirt bike created damage. Vehicle traffic compacts soil, which prevents dispersal of wastewater and can eventually crush tile laterals. Lids and inspection ports can also be damaged allowing damage by wildlife. Before you allow vehicle traffic on your property, find out where your system is at and steer traffic around it.
3. **Failure to follow the recommended pump frequency** for the tank. The design of a tank allows the solids to settle to the bottom while the wastewater is clarified by bacteria. No miracle cleaner can effectively remove these solids; they must eventually be pumped out. If the solids level gets too high, the tank no longer works as a tank. It acts more like a straight pipe dumping untreated sewage into the outlet tile or leach field clogging them both. Owners can add additional insurance against these discharges by installing an outlet filter on the tank. Tank filters are inexpensive (\$100-\$150) and have been required on new systems since 2007.
4. **Dirty or clogged outlet filters** can cause the outlet of a tank to be blocked. Filters prevent solids from exiting the tank. As mentioned above, filters protect the secondary treatment component of a septic system, however, if filters become clogged effluent (black water) cannot exit the tank. This causes the tank to be not drain properly and can cause sewage to back-up into the home, or around the tank.
5. **Oils, Grease and Chemicals** Most newer tanks can accommodate some levels of oils and grease, but older tanks and tanks full of solids may not. Grease and oil can pass through the tank and clog tiles and soil pores. It takes a very long time for oils and greases to break down naturally. Never dump oil, grease or greasy waste down the sink. Never dump paints, fuel, coffee grounds or solvents down the drain. Visit Defiance County Environmental Services website or call 419-782-5442 for information on proper disposal of chemicals.

Defiance County General Health District - Operation Permit Terms and Conditions

Operation Permit - General Provisions

1. Each owner of an STS or GWRS in Defiance County shall operate and maintain their system so that a public health nuisance is not created.
2. Each owner of an STS or GWRS in Defiance County shall obtain an Operation Permit from the Board of Health.
3. Owners must apply for Operation Permits in accordance with Schedule A. The operation permit is valid for a maximum of four years from the due date.
4. If more than one STS or GWRS exists on a parcel or at an address, the property owner will be responsible for obtaining Operation Permits for each system.
5. If an STS or GWRS has a tank located on a parcel separate from form the structure that it serves, the owner of the parcel on which the tank is located shall be responsible for obtaining the Operation Permit and performing system maintenance.
6. Failure of the Health District to contact the owner of an STS or GWRS does not negate the owner's obligation to obtain an operation permit.
7. Permit fees are not refundable.
8. Permits are transferrable upon the sale of the property for which the permit was issued.
9. The Board of Health shall adopt fees and collect late fees in accordance with Revised Code 3709.09.
10. To be removed from the operation permit requirement, a dwelling, building or other structure must be connected to a sanitary sewer system or the owner must provide evidence to the district that the system was properly abandoned. Any STS or water system must be properly abandoned per OAC 3701-29 or 3701-28.
11. Tanks at abandoned sites, abandoned structures, and unused sites in which the STS or GWRS is receiving no effluent, do not need to follow the pumping schedule to meet the permit requirements. The STS or GWRS must only be inspected for safety.
12. Tanks serving unused structures must be pumped prior to the structure being occupied or sold.
13. Tanks must be maintained watertight and safe. Tanks that are not watertight (as evidenced by leakage or flooding) or safe must be repaired or abandoned.

Inspection Standards

1. Each owner of an STS or GWRS shall have the system inspected and/or the tank pumped by a registered contractor during the period covered by the operation permit
2. Each owner of an STS or GWRS shall provide documentation of inspection or maintenance to the Board of Health within 60 days of the service.
3. Should an owner fail to provide evidence of inspection, the Health District shall inspect the system. The Health District shall inspect the STS or GWRS and bill the owner for the inspection and collect any fees adopted by the Board of Health. The Health District will issue a notice to the owner regarding any required maintenance or repairs.
4. Each owner of an STS or GWRS shall have their tank pumped by a Registered Septage Hauler in accordance with Schedule B or an alternate schedule approved by the district. Any maintenance or repairs must be reported on documents to the Board of Health. Health.
5. Reports shall include information on the condition of the tank; solid & scum levels in the tank; the operability of pumps and aeration motors, timers and filters; the any storm or surface water entering the system, nuisance conditions, blockages or safety concerns.

National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Systems

If an HSTS that is required to obtain an NPDES general discharge permit per revised code 611, the owner must do all of the following:

1. Maintain a service contract with a Registered Service Provider.
2. Provide proof to the Board of Health that a service contract is in place and maintenance is being completed according to the manufacturer's specifications.
3. Provide to the Board of Health copies of the lab reports documenting annual effluent tests.
4. Operate and maintain the system in accordance with the terms and conditions of the NPDES permit.