



FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) for the new Sewage O&M Program

What is O&M? O&M stands for Operation and Maintenance. After a sewage treatment system (STS) is installed, there is a certain amount of management that should occur to keep an STS working properly so that it does not pollute surface and underground water supplies.

Why is this program being created now in Logan County? On January 1, 2015, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), as directed by the state legislature, adopted the Sewage Treatment System Rules for the entire state of Ohio. These rules are now the minimum standards that all local health districts (LHDs) must follow regarding the treatment of private wastewater in Ohio. Within the next three (3) years, the ODH expects to complete an audit of all LHDs to determine how their sewage O&M programs are being administered.

What will be the costs to property owners with the O&M Program? A \$50 “renewable” sewage operation permit will now be required. Additionally, a \$50 sewage operation inspection fee may be charged by the health district for any inspection conducted of an existing STS in order to administer the O&M program.

What does the term “renewable” mean? Renewable means that operation permits will have expiration limits that then require the application for and purchase of a new permit.

Is there a penalty if I don't pay? Failure to pay operation and/or inspection fees will result in an additional 25% penalty fee. All unpaid fees will be added to the property owner's taxes.

When will the O&M program begin? After adoption of the Sewage O&M Program by the Logan County Board of Health, the program will become effective January 1, 2019. Applications for new sewage operation permits will then begin to be mailed since after that date all previous sewage operation permits (if issued before January 1, 2015) will no longer be valid. Following the receipt of the new sewage operation permit application, all applicable fees and completion of the LCHD assessment of the STS, a new sewage operation permit will be mailed to the property owner.

Will the assessment let me know what type of sewage system I have? Yes, the assessment by the Logan County Health District (LCHD) either through a records search of the LCHD files or if no valid sewage permit can be located then by an on-site inspection will allow for

all STSs to be identified and categorized into one of three (3) separate operation permit cycles (see Table 1 below).

Table 1. Inspection Requirements.	
<i>The following are the inspection cycles for the various types of Sewage Treatment Systems (STSs).</i>	
Frequency Group (in order of risk, highest to lowest)	Requirement
A. Aerators, mechanical components (pumps and blowers), etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular Aerator ▪ NPDES Aerator ▪ Drip Distribution System ▪ Aerator to Leaching Trenches ▪ Aerator to Mound ▪ Aerator to SSF ▪ Aerator to Peat/Sphagnum Moss Filter ▪ Aerator to any other STS ▪ ST to SB2 ▪ ST to Mound ▪ ST to Lift Station to Mound ▪ ST to Lift Station to Leaching Trenches ▪ Lift Station to any other STS ▪ STS with sump pump in the perimeter drain ▪ Holding tank, privy vault, experimental or STS with time-limited variance ▪ Unknown STS (until STS is categorized by type) 	One Inspection Per Permit Cycle (once annually)
B. Septic Tank (ST) to filter beds with OEPA NPDES permits, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ST to Subsurface Sand Filter (Discharging off lot) ▪ ST to Peat/Sphagnum Moss Filter (Discharging off lot) ▪ ST to Filter Bed (Discharging off lot) 	One Inspection per Permit Cycle (1time per 5 years) <u>Note: Clear water curtain drains are exempt.</u>
C. Septic Tank (ST) to leach field, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ST to leaching trenches ▪ ST to Filter Bed (Non-Discharging so wastewater stays on lot) ▪ GWRS 	One Inspection per Permit Cycle (1time per 10 years)

What if I have an old sewage system that is not up to the present code? If no “public health nuisance” is observed during the initial assessment phase, then no other changes are required other than installing applicable risers and/or inspection/sampling ports to aid in the future maintenance and inspection of the system.

If my STS has “failed” due to it not draining properly or because it is creating a public health nuisance, how much time will I have to fix it? The LCHD will work with each property owner to create an “incremental repair and/or replacement plan” to address the nuisance condition or system failure in a timely manner.

Is there any funding available to repair/replace “failed” sewage systems? Yes, the Ohio EPA has made available to participating health districts up to \$150,000 per year to repair/replace improper sewage systems through their Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) grant program. Payment is based on poverty guideline tables to determine eligibility for 50%, 85% and 100% of the cost of repair.

After the first round of assessments by the health district, will anyone else be allowed to conduct on-site sewage operation permit inspections? Yes, service providers such as septic tank cleaners, STS installers, even property owners themselves for their own residences (after registering and passing a sewage exam) can conduct the operation permit inspections. However, if no alternative arrangement is made by the property owner for an operation inspection to be completed during the permit cycle, the LCHD will conduct an inspection and charge the appropriate fee.

If I wish to sell my house will I have to escrow money to cover the cost of a future replacement system? Only if a nuisance condition is observed at the time of the sale would arrangements have to be made for an “incremental repair/replacement plan,” otherwise such arrangements are strictly between the buyer and seller.

If I sell my house will the new owner have to purchase a new operation permit? No, the operation permit is connected to the sewage system. The operation permit would not have to be renewed by the new owner until it expires, although in some cases it could be annually.

For additional questions please email Tim Smith at tsmith@co.logan.oh.us.