

Thurston County
Permitting System Policies & Procedures

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Number: ONST.13.POL.808
Title: SEWAGE SYSTEMS REQUIRING OPERATIONAL CERTIFICATES

Related: ONST.13.POL.605
ONST.10.POL.846
ONST.13.POL.833

Approved: 
Environmental Health Director
Date: 08/02/2013

Cancels: ONST.12.POL.808 (10/10/12) RCW/Code: Article IV, Section 16

This policy applies to on-site sewage systems (OSS) in Thurston County that are outside of the Marine Recovery Area boundary.

1. Operational Certificates (OPC) are required for the following categories of on-site sewage systems (OSS):

- A. Experimental OSS or OSS for which there is a proprietary product development permit;
- B. Community OSS;
 - . Design flows of 1000 or more gallons per day
 - . Within the Urban Growth Area of Lacey, Olympia, or Tumwater design flows greater than 600 gpd
 - . Serving more than two (2) residential units
- C. OSS serving food establishments regulated by Article II of this Code;
- E. OSS that include any of the following components or methods of treatment or dispersal:
 - 1. A category I or II proprietary treatment product that is, or was, registered for use per Chapter 246-272A WAC, such as aerobic treatment units (ATU) and Glendon® Biofilter
 - 2. Disinfection unit or method
 - 3. Drip line distribution product
 - 4. Recirculating Sand Filter
 - 5. Holding Tank
 - 6. Mound
 - 7. Intermittent Sand Filter
 - 8. Stratified Sand Filter
 - 9. Remediation technology permitted by the Health Officer
 - 10. Where soil loading rates are increased under section 11.5.5.15 of Article IV
 - 11. Other OSS as determined by the Health Officer.
 - 12. Interlaced Drainfields

2. OSS must be inspected by people with appropriate training and certifications.

- A. Gravity, pressure distribution, mound, Glendon® BioFilter systems can be inspected by:
 - Certified pumpers, installers, monitoring specialists or responsible management entities
 - OSS owners may that have been trained and certified by the County to inspect the systems listed in 2A
 - OSS owners that provide documentation of equivalent training and/or relevant experience acceptable to the Health Officer

- B. Intermittent Sand filter systems and Holding Tanks can be inspected by:
 - Pumpers who are certified to inspect sand filters
 - Installers, Certified Monitoring Specialists or responsible management entities
- C. Proprietary treatment products (except Glendon ® BioFilter systems), disinfection unit or method, drip line distribution product, recirculating sand filter, stratified sand filter, OSS fitted with remediation technology can only be inspected by:
 - Certified monitoring specialists
- D. Community systems with 3 or more connections OR >1000 gallons per day design flow or actual flow may only be inspected by:
 - Certified monitoring specialistsExcept: Standard gravity community systems (see below)
- E. Community systems that are standard gravity systems AND were in existence prior to 9/1/90
 - Certified OSS professionals (pumpers, installers, monitoring specialists)

An OSS with two connections is not considered a community system and who can inspect and the frequency of inspections is based upon the system type.

3. OSS Certificate renewal date is determined by system type and use.

- A. Annual renewal
 - Proprietary treatment products (see Glendon below)
 - Systems with disinfection
 - Community systems for those components that meet community system definition (See 1B above)
 - Larger on-site systems (LOSS)
 - Food Establishments
 - Schools
 - Drip line distribution
- B. Glendon ® BioFilter
 - First year after installation and every 3 years thereafter
- C. Renewal every 3 years
 - All other systems
 - Sewage tanks within Community systems that serve only one or two residential units

4. Inspection reports shall be submitted on Department forms or in a format acceptable to the Department.

5. Service Contracts are required for some systems. See ONST.13.POL.605.

6. Number of Operational Certificates

- A. A single-family residence or a single use connection, i.e. one business office, requires one certificate.
- B. An OSS serving 2 residential or commercial units requires one certificate for the individual tank(s) and components serving one unit and the set of shared components **PLUS one** certificate for any individual components serving the second unit. If both units share all OSS components then one certificate is required. If there are components that serve only one of the two units, there will be a maximum of two certificates required for the OSS. This policy applies

regardless of whether the OSS is wholly on one or multiple parcels or owned by single or multiple owners.

- C. A community system requires one certificate for each tank or set of individual components PLUS one certificate for the shared community system components, i.e. shared pump chamber and drainfield.

EXAMPLES:

1. A mobile home park has two OSS on one lot, and consists of 9 2- bedroom mobiles served by 2 gravity sewage systems. One OSS serves 4 units (960 gpd), while the other serves 5 units (1200 gpd). Is an Operational Certificate required for either system?
YES. Both OSS require an OPC because each OSS serves more than two (2) units.
2. A community system is proposed in the rural county (Sewerage General Plan does not apply) and outside any MRA or area of special concern that will serve two duplexes on one lot. Each duplex has 2 bedrooms per unit (4 total per duplex). The system will utilize pressure distribution and sand lined trenches. Does this system require an Operational Certificate?
YES. Meets the definition of community system (serves more than two [2] units).
3. A home and a cabin are located on a single lot and are served by a sand filter/pressure distribution system. The system is sized for 8 bedrooms. Does it need an Operational Certificate?
YES. All lined sand filters are required to have Operational Certificates.
4. A condominium complex consists of 7 buildings, each with 4-2 bedroom units. Five buildings each have 2 tanks and 1 drainfield. The other 2 buildings each have 4 tanks (one tank per living unit) and 1 drainfield. Which require OPCs and how many?
All require OPCs because for all buildings there are three or more units sharing a common drainfield. An OPC is required for each septic tank and one OPC for each shared drainfield. Therefore, 18 OPC's would be issued for the septic tanks and 7 OPC's for the 7 drainfields.
5. A home and a cabin are located on a single lot and are served by a sand filter/pressure distribution system. The home and cabin have separate septic tanks and pump tanks. The system is sized for 8 bedrooms. Does it need an Operational Certificate?
YES. Two OPC's are required. One for the first septic tank, pump chamber sand filter and drainfield. Second OPC for the other septic tank and pump chamber.