Tank Replacement Policy

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
Healthy People in Healthy Communities

We allow discrete tank replacements outside of any repairs on the drainfield. This document outlines the requirements for different types of tank replacements.

General requirements and considerations

- Site plans and record drawings must meet requirements outlined in Environmental Health Code Chapter 2.
- All new tanks must meet criteria defined in Environmental Health Code Chapter 2, WAC 246-272A, Recommended Standards and Guidance (RS&G) documents, and List of Registered Sewage Tanks.
- We require an initial full (routine or startup) operation and maintenance (O&M) inspection of all components for all tank replacements. We require a stress test when the tank is not water-tight and the liquid level is low.
    - When no record drawing is available, we require a locate.
    - We require locates for any drainfield without clear records within 100 feet of surface water. We may require dye testing.
- You must include startup inspection information on the record drawing.
    - The installer must verify the system is operational before you submit your record drawing.
- Certified septic professionals must install outlet filters on all septic tanks.
    - Outlet filters should meet requirements in Pressure Distribution Systems RS&G 2.3.3.
- A designer must justify the adequacy of any system where tanks are replaced for remodel applications and no previous permitting records are available.
- Refer to the One-Compartment Septic Tanks Policy when a one-compartment septic tank is present.

Types of replacements pump tank replacement – Pressure system

- Installers may apply for pump tank replacement if the new tank will be the same size (1000-gallon minimum) and similar elevation as the original tank and system meets current O&M requirements.
    - Tank must meet current sizing requirements.
- Designers must submit the application if tank size, elevation, etc. need to change from the original.
- We require a full O&M startup inspection with a pressure test at time of installation.
    - Certified septic professionals must install sweeps must if not present.
    - A certified septic professional or homeowner must add risers to all tanks, including tanks that you don't replace.
    - Ball valves must be accessible.
    - System must be time dosed at record drawing. Install control panel if not present.

Pump tank replacement – Pump to gravity system

- Designers or installers may apply for pump tank replacement when a timer panel is present. Designers must submit the application if a timer panel is not present.
    - Tank must meet current sizing requirements.
    - Pump basins must be replaced by a 1000-gallon minimum tank per Dosing Gravity Drainfield Systems RS&G.
        - Consult with Health Department staff if site constraints do not allow a 1000-gallon tank. We may require a variance.
- We require a full O&M start up inspection with exposure and inspection of the distribution box (when present) at time of installation. We require the installation of a timer panel when not present.

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- A certified septic professional must take measures to dissipate the velocity of the influent delivered by a pump or siphon, and to prevent direct flow of effluent across the distribution box resulting in unequal distribution among the outlets – Dosing Gravity Drainfield Systems RS&G.

ATU tank replacement

- You must submit Aerobic Treatment Unit (ATU) tank and sand filter unit replacement applications as a Partial Repair application. This includes a change to a different treatment product.
- Designers must submit these applications when:
    - The ATU is being replaced with a different make, model, or capacity.
    - A sand filter is being replaced with another sand filter or a different treatment level B device.
- Installers may submit applications to replace ATU tanks when they are the same make, model, and capacity as the existing ATU.
    - Replacement should occur in the same area/elevation as the previous tank(s).

Septic tank replacement

Designers or installers may submit septic tank replacement applications.

Definitions

System locate

Helps estimate septic system capacity—used to expand, replace or add a residential or commercial structure served by an existing OSS or change the use of a structure served by an existing OSS (Sec 31, table 7).

- If the system is inadequate for the proposal, we may require a new septic design.
- A septic professional should locate the system and draw a site or design plan.
- The drawing must provide clear and accurate information about all septic components:
    - Tank(s) size, material and number of compartments.
    - Pumps.
    - Transport line.
    - Drainfield location, length and depth of each lateral and material used.
- The drawing must also include:
    - The septic professionals name and title/license.
    - The method used to locate and identify the components (camera scoped, located each end of laterals, dug up tank, etc.).

Stress test

Stress tests must dose the system with 100 gallons within 1 hour. Certified septic professionals must document any variation from this requirement.

Stress tests provide a snapshot on the functionality of the septic system. It does not determine capacity.