



AMADOR COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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To: Amador County Land Use Committee

From: Michelle Opalenik, Director *MWO*  
Amador County Environmental Health Department

Date: July 19, 2021

**RE: Proposed Revisions to Amador County's On-site Wastewater Treatment System Regulations**

Attached for your consideration and discussion, are draft revisions to Amador County's 2016 On-site Wastewater Treatment System Regulations, also known as the Local Agency Management Program.

The primary intent of these proposed revisions is to eliminate the Department's role in designing conventional sewage disposal system permits. Per the draft revisions, a qualified professional (private contractor) will design all new and replacement on-site wastewater systems, including conventional systems. A qualified professional is defined to mean an individual licensed or certified by a State of California agency to design a sewage disposal system. Department staff will continue to be present for soil profile investigations and shall review and approve all designs prior to permit issuance and commencement of construction. The following itemizes the proposed revisions:

- ❖ The definition of "Qualified Professional" has been reworded to match that found in the State Water Resources Control Board Policy for Siting, Design, Operation and Management of On-site Wastewater Treatment Systems.
- ❖ **Section VI (Site Evaluation and Testing)** contains the bulk of the proposed revisions. This chapter consolidates Section IV(D) and Section V in the 2016 regulations. The changes expand the role of the qualified professional, who must now be present for all site evaluations and soil profile testing for new and/or replacement onsite wastewater systems. Any reference to Department staff preparing conventional permits for issuance has been removed. Otherwise, language on percolation testing, wet weather testing, slope stability, and plot plans/system designs remain substantially unchanged.
- ❖ For reconstruction following a fire or other disaster, where a permit is needed for replacement or certification of an existing onsite wastewater system, language has been added to clarify that this design work must be done by a qualified professional [**Section XI(D)**].

The following are some proposed revisions unrelated to the above:

- ❖ New definitions have been added for "Drainage Course" and "Perennial Stream".
- ❖ Two changes have been made to the design guidelines for **at-grade beds** [**Section VIII (Q)**]. First, under

certain soil conditions, some at-grade beds do not require pre-treatment. Second, a Porchet Chart has been added to aid hydraulic calculations.

- ❖ The filter media specifications found in the design guidelines for Mounds [Section VIII(R)] and Pretreatment [Section VIII(V)] have been modified to allow for the use of courser sand than specified in the 2016 regulations in cases where the designer specifies frequent, smaller doses of effluent.

Thank you for your consideration and discussion. The Department has given written notice to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board of the intention to modify the County's 2016 On-site Treatment System Regulations. The Regional Board will not review the revised regulations until the test is approved by the Amador County Board of Supervisors.