

## Onsite Repair Protocol FAQ's

- 1. Is the new Onsite Repair Protocol a new law?** No, the protocol is taken directly from the current onsite sewage treatment and disposal laws 420-3-1-.47. The protocol is to determine if the repair is in compliance with applicable Alabama Law and the State Board of Health Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal Rules, Chapter 420-3-1.
- 2. Can a system be “grandfathered”?** The Bureau defines grandfathered as, “a provision which an old rule continues to apply to some existing situation while a new rule will apply to all future cases.” The Bureau is not exempting any systems; the system to be repaired was either approved or not approved by the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH). If the system was approved by ADPH then certain components, such as headers, existing field lines, etc may be incorporated into the system.
- 3. Is a percolation test required for repairs?** No, if the system has been approved by the Local County Health Department (LCHD) the previous soil test data may be used by the Soil Professional in his design of the repair. This does not apply to replacements.
- 4. I have my “Approval For Use.” My soil professional is using my old soil data. The soil data used was submitted during the previous Onsite Sewage Rules when only one (1) percolation test was required. Can you use the soil data from the one (1) percolation test provided?** Yes, as long as an “Approval For Use” is on file. See #3.
- 5. I do not have my “Approval For Use,” do I need a soil evaluation to replace the tank?** No, for tank replacement and other non-perforated components, a signed CEP-2 (first page) with fee, if applicable, is to be submitted to the LCHD. A permit to install will be issued and the installer must call the LCHD prior to installation to give the environmentalist an

opportunity to inspect. After the CEP-5 is received by the LCHD, an “Approval For Use” is issued.

6. **Do I need a permit number to purchase a septic tank?** If previously approved by the LCHD, the original permit number will be used to purchase the tank. For a non-approved system, once a permit has been issued, that permit number will be used. See #5.
  
7. **I can't find my “Approval For Use” that shows my septic tank installation was approved; will the LCHD have a copy?** When an environmentalist approves an onsite sewage disposal system, two copies of the approval is issued, one to the installer or the homeowner and the LCHD files a copy. Some LCHDs will not have a record/copy of an approved system due to fire or water damage, accidental loss of the information and more. If not found at LCHD, the homeowner should first contact the installer of the system. If no paperwork is found, you must obtain the services of a site professional. If the LCHD has no record on file due to fire, water damage, etc, an ADPH Professional Soil Classifier may be contacted for assistance by the local environmentalist at anytime but it will depend on their availability.
  
8. **If you are located in a “Site Evaluation County”, do you have to contact a site professional (engineer, land surveyor, etc)?** No, the Public Health Environmental Site Specialist (PHESS) may evaluate, perform soil borings, and size repairs for small flow conventional systems only. The applicable site evaluation fee will apply. ADPH Professional Soil Classifier’s may be contacted for assistance at anytime but it will depend on their availability.
  
9. **Why did I receive a letter from the LCHD regarding the onsite repair policy?** The letter was sent to site professionals and Alabama Onsite Wastewater Board (AOWB) licensed installers as a courtesy to make them aware of the protocol; however, all interpretations of the Onsite Repair

Protocol shall come from the Bureau's Community Environmental Protection Division.

10. **If I have my "Approval For Use" and only need to replace a non-perforated component, will a CEP-2 be required?** No, a verbal permit will be issued to the installer by the local environmentalist & documentation will be required in the database and/or file by the environmentalist.
11. **Will this new repair protocol cause an increase in illegal installations?** In multiple counties where similar protocols have been in place for years, the LCHD has documented no increase of illegal installations. If an illegal installation is reported, normal legal procedures with the AOWB shall be followed.
12. **Does the new onsite repair protocol require me to have a permit to have my tank pumped?** No, you need to contact an AOWB licensed pumper (334-353-9250). The ADPH recommends that you have your tank pumped every 3-5 years. Having to frequently pump your tank may indicate a possible failure.
13. **If a section of the disposal field is damaged (run-over by vehicle or tree roots) and causing a system failure, can the damaged area be repaired without going through the process of hiring a site professional and obtaining a permit?** A component of the disposal field, (such as supply lines, field lines, or crossovers), may be repaired at the discretion of the LCHD if the damage was caused by an external factor such as a vehicle or tree roots. This does not apply to a failure caused by a defective product, misuse, neglect, not properly maintained or bio-mat. These repairs shall be limited to the damaged component only. Any further repairs would require a Permit. If an "Approval For Use" is not on file, then a CEP-2 with applicable fee shall be submitted to the LCHD. A Permit for the repair will be issued and the installer must call the LCHD prior to

installation to give the environmentalist an opportunity to inspect. After the CEP-5 is received by the LCHD, an “Approval For Use” is issued.

14. **An environmentalist receives an Application for an OSS and an Application for a Repair, which one is a priority?** The repair application should be first priority. All Applications should be worked within 10 working days.

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