

**SENECA COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

**Septic Treatment Systems Inspections by Service Providers for Real Estate
Transactions**

I. PURPOSE

This SOP establishes general guidelines and responsibilities for the Seneca County General Health District's inspection procedures for Real Estate Inspections by approved service providers

II. REFERENCES

a. OAC 3701-29 Sewage Treatment Systems Rules

III. SCOPE

This Standard Operating Procedure applies to all approved service providers who evaluate sewage treatment systems for real estate transactions within the District

IV. DEFINITIONS

Black Water – The portion of the wastewater stream that originates from toilet fixtures, dishwashers, dish sinks, and food preparation sinks.

Gray Water – Wastewater discharged from lavatories, bathtubs, showers, clothes washers, and laundry sinks that does not contain food wastes, urine, or fecal matter.

Gray Water Recycling Systems – GWRS – Systems that treat, reuse, or recycle back into the environment waste water discharged from lavatories, bathtubs, showers, clothes washers and laundry sinks that does not contain food wastes or bodily wastes.

Household Septic Treatment System – HSTS - Any sewage treatment system that receives sewage from a single-family, two-family, or three-family dwelling

Inspection – The onsite evaluation or analysis of the operation of a sewage treatment system.

Nuisance - any condition of sewage that is potentially injurious to the health, safety, comfort, or property of a person, or pollutes waters of the state.

OAC - Ohio Administrative Code

Operation & Maintenance – O & M – All routine or periodic action taken to assure that an existing sewage treatment system operates as it was intended.

Service Provider – Any person who services, monitors, evaluates, or samples but does not install or alter sewage treatment systems or gray water recycling systems.

SCGHD – Seneca County General Health District

Sewage - Liquid waste containing animal or vegetable matter in suspension or solution that originates from humans and human activities.

Sewage Treatment System – STS - Household Sewage Treatment System

V. GOAL

The goal of this Standard Operating Procedure is to achieve a high level of accuracy and consistency by all approved service providers performing sewage treatment system inspections for Real Estate transaction of private residences located within the District’s jurisdiction.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE

All individuals, other than sanitarians licensed by the State of Ohio and employed by the Seneca County General Health District, shall be registered with the Seneca County General Health District prior to an inspection of a STS, a HSTS, or a GWRS.

V. SERVICE PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES

Prior to conducting a STS inspection, the service provider must perform the following duties when performing the inspection:

Administrative

1. Submit documentation to the SCGHD on property address, owner, and buyer. Provide the realtor’s name, company, and phone number.
2. Obtain a copy of the septic permit for reference during the inspection.
3. Review previous real estate inspection reports if applicable.
4. Obtain the STS inspection worksheet from the SCGHD

5. Return the STS Inspection Worksheet to the SCGHD after the inspection
6. Instruct the seller, home owner, to purchase an Operation & Maintenance Agreement from the SCGHD.
7. The Inspection Report will be released after the SCGHD has reviewed the report and obtained a signed Operation & Maintenance Agreement.

HOME SEPTIC TREATMENT SYSTEM INSPECTION

1. Determine the type and location of the STS from the sewage permit or by observation.
2. Document the exact distance between the water supply and the HSTS.
3. Locate the septic tank.
 - a) Determine the condition of the tank
 - b) Estimate the size or obtain the size from the sewage permit.
 - c) Check risers
 - d) Inspect contents
 - e) Determine if the contents are at normal or abnormal levels
 - f) Determine if the tank needs to be pumped
4. Locate the distribution box.
 - a) Check risers
 - b) Determine the condition of the distribution box.
 - c) Determine if the effluent levels are at normal or abnormal levels
5. Locate the Secondary Treatment
 - a) Document the type of secondary treatment
 - b) Probe the secondary treatment to verify the type and condition of the system.
 - c) Walk over secondary treatment area looking for sewage effluent discharge and determine if the area is solid or saturated (failure, area cannot absorb moisture)
 - d) Locate a discharge tile from the HSTS or curtain drain (ditch, stream, etc.).
 - e) Observe area around discharge tile for sewage effluent.
 - f) Dye septic system
6. Dyeing septic system

- a) Pour tracing dye into the septic tank.
 - b) Use a water hose to run water into the septic tank to simulate normal usage. Run the water for one hour.
 - c) Watch the discharge tile to see if tracing dye flows out of the tile.
 - d) If tracing dye is detected flowing from the discharge tile, system has failed.
7. Aeration Tank Inspection
- a) Open riser to observe electric motor.
 - b) Check if motor is there.
 - c) Determine if motor is operational.
 - d) Check the condition of the tank.
 - e) Check the alarm
8. Check all HSTS plumbing
- a) All gray water (water drains, washing machines, etc.) and black water (toilets) must go into septic tank
 - b) Sump pumps cannot discharge into the septic tank.
 - c) Water softener discharge can flow into the septic tank, or a footer tile.
9. Fill out all required forms.

REAL ESTATE REPORT

1. Submit the signed inspection form to the Environmental Clerk.
2. A sanitarian will review the inspection report.
3. The clerk will draft the Real Estate Report.
4. The inspector shall sign the Real Estate Report.
5. The inspection report will be held until there is a signed operation and maintenance agreement.
6. The inspection report will be forwarded to the applicant.
7. Any major violations (HSTS failure, etc) shall be addressed in a letter to the property owner.
5. The letter shall be mailed by certified mail with a copy included with the Real Estate Report.