

RSS Deficiencies with Resolutions



Information for Program Staff and Industry Professionals • Nov. 30, 2015

On-Site Sewage Program
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The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (Health Department) requires a completed satisfactory Report of System Status (RSS) prior to a real estate transaction in accordance with the Environmental Health Code Chapter 2, Section 34. This document was created to provide consistent resolutions for common deficiencies found during the RSS process. The document is being shared with Industry Professionals to help inform their customers of the required resolutions. Deficiencies are grouped in categories listed below in the left column. These deficiencies may be found during our field inspection or noted by the septic professional. The required resolution for each deficiency is listed in the right column.

Unpermitted or Unapproved Alterations	Factors	Resolution
Single Family Residence (SFR) converted to Multi-Family or Commercial.	Wastewater flow increase	Remodel Application with design and justification – contact designer or professional engineer.* Application type may vary depending upon the existing septic system, site conditions and designer recommendations.
Number of bedrooms increased by 100% (doubled or more).		
Existing structure (e.g., garage) converted into living space with bedroom(s) and plumbing.		
New structure built with living space with bedroom(s) and plumbing.		
Trailer on site connected to septic system.		
Occupied/Unapproved – septic design was approved, installation permit released and application expired before record drawing submittal or approval.		
Installed/replaced part or all of the drainfield (more than 10') not EMMR.	No wastewater flow increase	Remodel Application with site plan and justification – contact designer or professional engineer.*
Installation of sewage tanks or treatment devices (replacing or adding).		
Location of existing septic system components are significantly different than the location shown on Health Department records.	No wastewater flow increase	Field locate all unknown or undocumented septic components – contact an O&M professional, designer or professional engineer to submit an accurate drawing to scale. Dye test or water quality test may be required if water source is within 100' of drainfield.
Additional tight lines were installed and connected to existing approved septic system.		
Drainfield impacted by building foundation, in ground pools or other significant drainfield disturbing activity.		
No Record Drawing and drainfield appears to be within 100' of surface water.		

Critical Deficiencies	Factors	Resolution
Drainfield failure.	Damaged beyond repair	Design Repair Application – contact designer or professional engineer for replacement of drainfield or septic system.
Tank(s) – unrepairable.		Repair Application (tank replacement only) – contact O&M professional, installer, designer or professional engineer.
Drainfield is slow draining, saturated, or low draw down (resolution does not require digging in drainfield).	Repairable	Resolve drainfield deficiency – contact O&M professional. O&M professional to describe corrective actions taken on follow-up report to OnlineRME.
Tank(s) damaged – tank has holes, cracks or leaking.	Repairable EMMR required	Repair existing tank – contact O&M professional, describe corrective actions taken on EMMR report to OnlineRME.
Drainfield damaged – replacing or repairing less than 10' (resolution requires digging in the drainfield).		Repair drainfield – contact O&M professional. O&M professional to describe corrective actions taken on EMMR report to OnlineRME.
Septic component is absent or malfunctioning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pump • Air compressor • Float switch • UV light • Alarm • Panel • Other 	Critical for function	Repair or replace – contact O&M professional. Report corrections to OnlineRME.
Field inspection revealed other potential issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown or exposed pipes. • Other potential critical issue. 	Investigation required	Contact O&M professional for further investigation.

Non-Critical Deficiencies	Factors	Resolution
Other septic deficiencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lids are unsecured or broken (safety risk). • Baffles missing or broken. • Other non-critical deficiencies. 	Low impact to system function	Resolve deficiency – contact O&M professional to correct (report corrections to OnlineRME).
No access to the site or drainfield: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locked gates or no gate code provided. • Dogs on property. • Drainfield is overgrown. • Other (wrong address or drainfield offsite). 		Lids may be secured or replaced by property owners – submit documentation to Health Department for approval.
		Owner provides access – contact Health Department.**
		Clear drainfield– contact Health Department.**
		Owner to provide clarification.**

Report Discrepancies	Factors	Resolution
RME inspection report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing (no O&M inspection report). • Missing components (e.g., drainfield, pump, etc.). • Missing tests (e.g., draw down). • Missing description of corrective actions. • Components do not match our record drawing. • Dosing is missing or incorrect. • Pumping not done or reported. • Unclear and needs more information. 	System operation unknown	Contact O&M professional for the missing item(s) for any corrections needed.

Miscellaneous	Factors	Resolution
Community system not in compliance.	System operation unknown	Contact Home Owner Association (HOA) for Community Septic System inspection. If no HOA exists, contact O&M professional to obtain a Community Septic inspection.
More than one septic system and structure on the parcel.		Additional RSS application(s) may be required. Please check with us at (253) 798-6470 or email EHSepticSystems@tpchd.org .***
Outstanding fees owed.	N/A	Pay all outstanding fees.

* Unpermitted or unapproved installation of septic systems must meet current Health Department code.

** Three or more site visits to the property will require a re-inspection fee per visit.

*** If the additional septic system is an unapproved or unpermitted system, you will be required to contact a septic designer or professional engineer to submit an appropriate Remodel Application with fees. The Remodel Application may be submitted in lieu of the additional RSS so long as a field inspection and O&M inspection with pumping report is completed.