

POLICY NO: 910.3 H

SUBJECT: Issuance of Sewage Disposal Permits for Bedroom Additions

ISSUED: November 21, 1996

EFFECTIVE: November 30, 1996

SUPERSEDES: 910.3 H dated October 4, 1982

INTRODUCTION

In the past, it was considered mandatory for persons to add leach line to the on-site sewage disposal system if they added a bedroom to their dwelling. A number of problems are encountered by the Environmental health Officer in enforcing this requirement:

- A. The public has difficulty perceiving this as reasonable, as they are frequently not adding people, but only more space to their dwelling. Consequently, the additional leach field is seldom added voluntarily.
- B. Digging into existing leach fields can be disruptive and has occasionally actually caused failures.

DISPOSAL SYSTEM EXPANSION NOT MANDATORY

It is no longer mandatory to expand the disposal system when a bedroom(s) is added to the dwelling when an adequate replacement area is available for the increased use being proposed.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK

Is the disposal system operating satisfactorily is one of the important questions to ask in evaluating the situation. Is there an adequate replacement area for the increased use being proposed, is another important question to be answered.

DISCLOSURE LETTER REQUIRED

If the findings below can be made and the disposal system is not expanded to match the home size, then a return receipt requested letter of disclaimer must be written to the owner and placed in the address file documenting 1.) the existing system size or 2.) the lack of knowledge of the current system size and 3.) the increased use being proposed for the existing system.

REQUIRED FINDINGS

The EHO may approve an additional bedroom(s) or 10% increase in flow from a commercial establishment if it can be found that the increased use of the disposal system will not exceed it's reasonable capacity and one of the following:

1. That the disposal system was based on a Site Evaluation Report completed in accordance

with the requirements of the WQCB Basin Plan Policy and identifies an available replacement area capable of accommodating the proposed increase of use.

OR

2. That the Soil Conservation Service Soil Survey of Mendocino County Table 11 - Sanitary Facilities indicates slight limitation for septic tank systems and there is an available replacement area capable of accommodating the proposed increase of use.

OR

3. That adequate soil conditions, consistent as nearly as possible with the current WQCB Basin Plan Policy for Waste Water Disposal, exist on the property, as determined by the EHO or a Qualified Private Site Evaluator (QPSE), and there is an available replacement area capable of accommodating the proposed increase of use.

REQUIRE QPSE ONLY FOR CRITICAL CONDITIONS

The EHO should consider the requirement of a QPSE only for critically limiting conditions such as: high strength commercial waste, large volume flows, large increase in flows, severe soil and/or groundwater conditions, or sites requiring alternative/experimental systems.

The key question for the EHO to ask is: will a QPSE provide additional critical information, beyond our capacity and which is vital for a successful design?

If yes, then the property owner should be required to hire a QPSE to identify a replacement area consistent as nearly as possible with the current WQCB Basin Plan Policy for Waste Water Disposal.

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