

Title 15
SEWERS

Chapters:

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Chapter 15.04

ON-SITE SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS*

* Editor's Note: For further provisions regarding on-site sewage disposal systems, see State Board of Health rules and regulations dated June, 1974.

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15.04.010 Applicability of chapter.

The provisions of the rules and regulations codified in this chapter shall apply to all territory contained within the boundaries of the county.
(Ord. 31216 §1(part), 1977).

15.04.020 Places not accessible to public sewer.

Every residence, place of business, or other building or place where persons congregate, reside or are employed, to which a public sewer is not physically accessible or available, shall be provided with a water-flush toilet system or other approved device and shall be constructed and maintained in such a manner as to meet the requirements set forth in this chapter.
(Ord. 31216 §1(part), 1977).

15.04.030 Definitions.

For the purpose of this chapter, the following words or phrases shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section:

- A. "Approved" means acceptable by the health officer in writing.
- B. "Board" means the Whitman County board of health.
- C. "Cover" means fill material that is used to cover a subsurface disposal area.
- D. "Drainfield" means that portion of the on-site sewage disposal system which, consisting of perforated or sectional dispersal tile pipe, disperses and distributes the effluent from the sewage treatment facility.
- E. "Effluent" means the liquid and the liquid-carried portion of sewage which remains after sewage has been collected and processed in a sewage treatment facility.
- F. "Fill" means soil materials that have been displaced from their original location.
- G. "Groundwater" means subsurface water occupying the zone of saturation.
- H. "Health officer" means the health officer of the Whitman County health department or his authorized representative.
- I. "On-site sewage disposal system" means any system of piping, treatment devices, or other facilities that convey, store, treat, or dispose of sewage on the property where it originates or an adjacent or nearby property under the control of the user where the system is not connected to an approved public sewer.
- J. "Person" means any individual, corporation, company, association, society, firm, partnership, joint stock company or any branch of state or local government.
- K. "Potable water" means water free from impurities in amounts sufficient to cause disease or harmful physiological effects with the bacteriological and chemical quality conforming to applicable standards.
- L. "Public sewer system" means a sewage system which is owned or operated by a political

subdivision of the state, or other approved ownership, consisting of a collection system and necessary trunks, pumping facilities and a means of final treatment and disposal, and under permit from the Department of Ecology.

- M. "Repair" means the replacement, addition or alteration of a septic tank, distribution box, tight line, or other appurtenances to an existing individual sewage disposal system and including any replacement, addition, or alteration to a subsurface disposal field where at least a portion of the original subsurface disposal field is used. In those instances where no portion of the existing drainfield is used, it will be considered the same as a new system and will require a design.
- N. "Secretary" means the secretary of the State Department of Social and Health Services or his or her authorized representative.
- O. "Septic tank" or "sewage treatment facility" means a watertight receptacle which receives the discharge of sewage from a building sewer, and is designed and constructed so as to permit separation of settleable and floating solids from the liquid, and detention and digestion of the organic matter, prior to discharge of liquid wastes.
- P. "Sewage" means the water-carried human or domestic waste from residences, buildings, industrial establishments or other places, together with such ground water infiltration and other wastes as may be present.
- Q. "Soil study" means examination of soil characteristics utilizing soil log and/or percolation test.
- R. "Subdivision" means a division of land, as defined in RCW Chapter 58.17 now or as hereafter defined.
- S. "Surface water" means any body of water, whether fresh or marine, or watercourse, including lakes, impoundments or streams.

(Ord. 31216 §2, 1977).

15.04.040 Authority to adopt rules, regulations and procedures.

The county health department shall be responsible for the administration of the rules and regulations codified in this chapter. The county board of health shall:

- A. Adopt or amend rules and regulations governing the design, construction, installation and operation of on-site sewage disposal systems to ensure that the wastes from such systems:
 - 1. Will not pollute any bathing beach or stream used for public or domestic water supply purposes or recreation,
 - 2. Will not give rise to a public health hazard by being accessible to insects, rodents, or other carriers which may come into contact with food or potable water, or by being accessible to human beings,

3. Will not give rise to a nuisance due to odor or unsightly appearance, and
 4. Will not violate any other laws or regulations governing water pollution or sewage disposal;
- B. Hold public hearings in connection with proposed rules and regulations and amendments thereto;
 - C. Enforce the provisions of this regulation and any regulations adopted pursuant thereto;
 - D. Delegate, at its discretion, to any municipality or governmental agency any of its authority under these regulations in the administration of the rules and regulations adopted hereunder;
 - E. Issue permits, licenses, registration or other documents including the establishment of procedures and forms for the submission, review, approval, and rejection of applications required under this regulation; and
 - F. Issue such additional regulations and take such other actions as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of these regulations.

(Ord. 31216 §3, 1977).

15.04.050 Required connection to on-site sewage disposal system.

Every appropriate fixture and every sanitary drainage system not connected to a public sewer, or not required by law to be connected to a public sewer, shall be connected to an approved on-site sewage disposal system.

(Ord. 31216 §4, 1977).

15.04.060 Other types of disposal units.

Units other than septic tanks or devices that can function as septic tanks with subsurface disposal systems, including but not limited to chemical toilets, vault privies, incinerator toilets, mechanical and aerobic treatment devices and evapotranspiration systems may be used but only with the prior approval of the health officer and after a technical evaluation has been conducted by the technical review committee as per WAC 248-96-046.

(Ord. 31216 §5, 1977).

15.04.070 No discharge to waters or groundwaters.

A. Effluent from any on-site sewage disposal system shall not be discharged to surface water or upon the surface of the ground.

B. Subsurface on-site sewage disposal systems shall not be permitted to areas where a minimum separation of three feet between the bottom of the disposal field and the maximum average seasonal groundwater elevation or impermeable layer cannot be maintained. The health officer may require greater vertical separation as needed to protect public health when the aquifer is used for a potable water supply.

C. Subsurface on-site sewage disposal systems shall not be permitted in areas of fractured rock or excessively permeable material where it is likely that action of the soil profile will be ineffective in retaining and removing substances having adverse effect on groundwaters.
(Ord. 31216 §6, 1977).

15.04.080 Connection to public sewer systems.

Connection to a public sewer system shall be in accordance with WAC 248-96-060.
(Ord. 31216 §7, 1977).

15.04.090 Abandoned sewage disposal facilities.

A. From the effective date of these regulations, every septic tank, seepage pit and/or cesspool which has been abandoned or has been discontinued otherwise from further use or to which no waste or soil pipe from a plumbing fixture is connected shall have the sewage removed therefrom and be completely filled with earth, sand, gravel, concrete or other approved material.

B. Where disposal facilities are abandoned consequent to connecting any premises with the public sewer, the person making the connection shall fill abandoned facilities as required by the health officer within thirty days from the time of connecting to the public sewer.

C. The health officer may inspect such facilities to determine if such requirements have been met, and if approved, the disposal facility shall be filled to the level of the top of the ground.
(Ord. 31216 §8, 1977).

15.04.100 Larger systems.

In all cases where the maximum design flow of any on-site disposal system is greater than five thousand gallons per day, prior to instituting construction of the system, a copy of the construction plan shall be submitted to the health officer, who shall review the proposed system to determine that its use will be consistent with protection of the public health. Such approval shall have the concurrences of the Department of Social and Health Services, and the Department of Ecology.
(Ord. 31216 §9, 1977).

15.04.110 On-site system management.

On-site system management shall be in accordance with WAC 248-96-070.
(Ord. 31216 §10, 1977).

15.04.120 Exceptions to chapter regulations.

- A. The regulations in this chapter shall not apply to:
 - 1. New construction for which a permit was issued prior to the effective date of these regulations;
or

2. Existing systems where extensions or alterations are undertaken as a result of failure of the system or portions thereof, or pursuant to an order of the health officer prior to the effective date of these regulations.

B. Lots, parcels or tracts that have received written approval by the health officer prior to the effective date of these regulations shall be subject to only the design section of these regulations and any additional standards prescribed by the health officer. Provisions of this section shall also include extensions of existing systems to handle increase in flows from dwelling unit expansion.

C. These regulations shall not apply to facilities constructed or operated in accordance with a permit issued by the Washington State Department of Ecology, and where they may be in conflict with RCW Chapters 90.48 or 70.95B, said RCW shall govern.
(Ord. 31216 §11, 1977).

15.04.130 Permit required for on-site sewage disposal system.

No person shall install a new on-site sewage disposal system, nor perform major alterations, extensions or relocations of an existing system without a valid permit issued by the health officer. Permits for alterations or repairs shall be so identified.
(Ord. 31216 §12(A), 1977).

15.04.140 Permit--Application and information.

Applications for a sewage disposal system permit shall be made in writing to the health officer. The application shall contain the following information:

- A. Building permit: A valid building permit must be recorded prior to the issuance of an on-site sewage disposal permit. Building permits are issued by the Office of Public Works, Courthouse, Colfax;
- B. Name, address, and telephone number of the applicant;
- C. Legal description of proposed sewage disposal installation site;
- D. Type and size of facility to be served;
- E. Description of potable water supply;
- F. Name of licensed installer;
- G. Soil data which will include the following: types of soil and their depth, depth of water if encountered, depth of clay, hardpan, or massive rock if encountered;
- H. Anticipated maximum seasonal groundwater table;
- I. A plot plan (or layout sketch) showing distances from potable water supply, surface water, other

structures or improvements, and such topographical features relevant to the design and installation of the disposal system;

- J. Whether new construction or repairs to existing system;
- K. Specific septic tank and drainfield information;
- L. Plan approval by the health officer prior to system construction;
- M. Such other information as the health officer may require.

(Ord. 31216 §12(B), 1977).

15.04.150 Permit--Types and fee.

There shall be two types of permits, the fee for each to be twenty dollars. The types are as follows:

- A. Permits to construct and/or install a new or complete replacement on-site sewage disposal system which will serve a single-family residence or duplex;
- B. A permit to construct and/or install a new or complete replacement on-site sewage disposal system which will serve a facility other than a single-family residence or duplex. The design of such a system shall be done by a licensed, civil or sanitary engineer.

(Ord. 31216 §12(C), 1977).

15.04.160 Permit--Denial.

The health officer may deny the application if, after thorough investigation of said system, he finds the proposed sewage system cannot be made adequate for safe operation.

(Ord. 31216 §12(D), 1977).

15.04.170 Permit--Hearing.

Any person whose application for a permit under this regulation has been denied may request and shall be granted a hearing on the matter before the health officer within thirty days after the receipt of such request.

(Ord. 31216 §12(E), 1977).

15.04.180 Appeals to board of health.

Appeal from any findings of a hearing conducted by the health officer pursuant to these regulations will be accomplished by filing a written request with the county board of health within fifteen days following the hearing decision. Appeals shall be heard by the board of health within thirty days. The board of health may receive additional testimony, not available earlier, in its review of the findings and conclusions of the health officer.

(Ord. 31216 §13, 1977).

15.04.190 Minimum lot sizes for subdivisions.

A. On-site sewage disposal systems shall be installed on lots, parcels, or tracts that have sufficient amount of area with proper soils in which sewage can be retained and treated properly on-site. The number and type of soil studies shall be as prescribed by the health officer prior to preliminary plat approval.

B. If engineering justification can be provided that a lot or lots have a sufficient amount of area with proper soils to adequately retain and treat sewage on-site, taking into consideration those factors outlined below, then maximum lot size will be established by the health officer on the basis of the information submitted. Factors that must be considered when determining minimum lot size include but are not limited to the following:

1. Soil type and depth;
2. Area drainage, lot drainage;
3. Protection of surface and groundwaters;
4. Setbacks from property lines, water supplies, etc.;
5. Source of domestic water;
6. Topography, geology and ground cover;
7. Climatic conditions;
8. Availability of public sewers;
9. Activity or land use, present and anticipated;
10. Growth patterns;
11. Individual and accumulated gross effects of water quality;
12. Reserve areas for replacement subsurface disposal;
13. Anticipated sewage volume.

(Ord. 31216 §14, 1977).

15.04.200 Location of component parts.

The minimum distance for location of the various component parts of the on-site sewage disposal system shall be in compliance with WAC 248-96-100.

(Ord. 31216 §15, 1977).

15.04.210 Design criteria.

A. The detailed design and construction of all systems shall conform to the "Manual of Septic Tank Practice," U.S. Public Health Service Publication No. 526, 1967, or any succeeding edition, except where modified by, or in conflict with these regulations.

1. All tanks must have a minimum of two compartments.
2. Materials. Septic tanks and dosing tanks shall be constructed of corrosion-resistant material, and shall be watertight. They may be constructed of poured in-place concrete, precast reinforced concrete, concrete blocks with mortar joints, or other materials approved by the health officer and the secretary.
3. Suitable baffles and/or tees shall be provided to prevent floating solids from leaving the tank.
4. Access and cleanouts shall be provided for easy inspection and removal of tank contents.

B. Minimum tank capacity for residential dwellings and duplexes shall be:

1. Two or less bedrooms 900 gallons;
2. Three bedrooms 1000 gallons;
3. Four bedrooms 1250 gallons;
4. Add 250 gallons for each additional bedroom in excess of four.

C. The system shall be designed to receive all sanitary sewage and domestic waste from the building served unless otherwise approved by the health officer. Footing and roof drains shall not enter the sewage disposal system.

D. Effluent shall be disposed of by means of subsurface disposal fields except when special approval for other disposal systems is granted by the health officer and the secretary.

1. The installation and use of cesspools for disposal of sewage is not permitted.
2. Seepage pits shall not be used for the disposal of septic tank effluent except under special conditions approved by the health officer.
3. Sewage holding tanks shall not be used as a permanent method of disposal for residential dwellings. The health officer may allow holding tanks on an interim use basis to handle emergency situations or to correct existing problem systems. The health officer may allow holding tanks for controlled part-time use situations such as recreational vehicle parks and trailer dump stations; provided, that an approved on-site system management program as provided by Section 15.04.110 is in effect.

E. The size of the effluent absorption area shall be determined by an evaluation of soil data, drainage conditions, number of bedrooms and such other related data as may be required by the health officer.

1. There shall be sufficient space in the subsurface disposal area provided for the original drainfield and a replacement for the same length of dispersal pipe as used in the original drainfield.
2. Drainfields shall consist of not less than two dispersal laterals and no one lateral shall be more than one hundred feet in length from where the dispersal pipe originates.
3. The slope of the drainfield pipe shall be from one to four inches per one hundred linear feet.
4. Any step-down drop in elevation within a drainfield shall be accomplished by use of watertight piping. The watertight top section of the step-down piping shall be supported on an undisturbed or tamped soil dam which extends the full width of the trench for a minimum of twelve inches prior to the vertical drop.
5. Washed gravel consisting of one-half to two and one-half inches in diameter shall be installed in all absorption trenches and shall be not less than six inches below nor less than two inches above the dispersal pipe and shall extend the entire width of the trench.
6. The drainfield pipe shall be four-inch inside diameter and shall be approved cast iron, asbestos, bituminized fiber, vitrified clay, or plastic. Flexible drain tile shall not be used.
7. Untreated building paper, straw, hay or similar decomposable materials shall be placed on top of the final gravel layer covering the drainfield pipe.
8. Subsurface disposal areas shall not be placed in areas subject to vehicular traffic and shall not be covered with an impervious surface.
9. All rough grading of the property which might affect the drainfield shall be done prior to the installation.

F. The subsurface disposal system generally shall not be installed in fill. Fill can be used as cover over a subsurface disposal area, provided that no portion of the absorption trenches are installed in this material.

The health officer may allow installation of a subsurface disposal system in fill that has been in place a period of time and has stabilized to the point where site conditions and soil tests show the site to be satisfactory to allow full compliance with provisions of these regulations.

G. Construction on slopes in excess of fifteen percent but not greater than thirty percent may be allowed; provided, that subsoil profiles indicate no restrictive layers of soil and appropriate engineering design is provided.

H. The absorption trench shall be installed no closer than ten feet to an interceptor drain line provided the interceptor drain is on a slope higher than the absorption trench. If the interceptor drain is below the absorption trench, the drain shall be installed no closer than thirty feet.

(Ord. 31216 §16, 1977).

15.04.220 Installer's license.

- A. It is unlawful to engage in business as a sewage disposal system installer without first having obtained a valid sewage disposal system installer's license from the county health department.
- B. The fee for a sewage disposal system installer's license shall be fifty dollars annually.
- C. Application for a sewage disposal system installer's license shall be made to the health officer, who may require the applicant to submit to a written and/or oral examination on the regulations and standards pertaining to the installation of on-site sewage disposal systems. Based on the above information, the health officer may approve or deny the application.
- D. The health officer may suspend or revoke a sewage disposal system installer's license if, after a hearing, he finds incompetency, negligence, misrepresentation, or failure to comply with these regulations.
- E. The sewage disposal system installer's license shall expire on December 31st of each year. (Ord. 31216 §17, 1977).

15.04.230 Disposal of septic tank waste.

- A. The contents of a septic tank or other treatment device shall be disposed of only in areas and in a manner approved by the health officer.
- B. Septic tank or other treatment device pumpers shall be in accordance with the provisions outlined in county Ordinance CJ No. 16620. (Ord. 31216 §18, 1977).

15.04.240 Inspection.

- A. The health officer may make inspections of all sewage disposal systems or parts thereof installed, altered, extended or replaced under the provisions of these regulations, unless specifically waived under these regulations.
- B. All portions of the system shall be left open and uncovered until inspected and approved. If any portion of the system is found to be in violation, the person doing the work, the installer and the person for whom the work is being done shall be notified by mail, in person, by tele- phone or by posting a written notice upon the premises. Any violation must be corrected and the work shall not be covered until it has been reinspected and approved. The health officer may waive this requirement provided the installation has been made by a person licensed under Section 15.04.220.
- C. Once a sewage disposal system has been installed, altered, extended or replaced and approved by the health officer, a certified "as built" drawing shall be provided to the health officer for a permanent record of the installation.
- D. The health officer has the authority to inspect all private sewage disposal systems and when a system is found to be in violation of Sections 15.04.040 and 15.04.070 of these rules and regulations, or in his

opinion is likely to create a health hazard due to improper construction, he shall have the authority to require the necessary alteration to reasonably assure proper operation.
(Ord. 31216 § 19, 1977).

15.04.250 Waiver of regulations.

Whenever a strict interpretation of these regulations would result in extreme hardship, the health officer may, upon concurrence of the secretary, waive such regulation or portion thereof; provided, that the waiver is consistent with the intent of these regulations and that no public health hazard will result.
(Ord. 31216 § 20, 1977).

15.04.260 Violation-Penalty.

Any person who refuses or fails to comply with the rules and regulations in this chapter shall be guilty of a gross misdemeanor. (Res. 44462, 1990: Ord. 31216 § 21, 1977).

Chapter 15.08

SEPTIC TANK CLEANING

Sections:

- 15.08.010 Scope of chapter.
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- 15.08.040 Registration fee.
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- 15.08.070 Pumpers--Compliance required.
- 15.08.080 Filing of bonds and fees.
- 15.08.090 Pumping equipment.
- 15.08.100 Equipment operation and maintenance.
- 15.08.110 Disposal of sewage, sludge and wastewater.
- 15.08.120 Spillage.

15.08.010 Scope of chapter.

The provisions of this chapter shall apply to all of the territory embraced within the limits of Whitman County except the incorporated cities of the first class.
(Prior code §5.20.010).

15.08.020 Permit required--Issuance and revocation.

It is unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to clean any septic tank, cesspool or sewage pit or other means of sewage disposal without first having obtained a registration permit from the county health officer. Said registration permit shall be issued yearly and shall be revocable for failure to comply with the rules and regulations governing sewage disposal of the county health department.
(Prior code §5.20.020).

15.08.030 Bond required--Claims.

All applicants shall deliver to the county health department at the time the application is filed, a bond to the county in a form approved by the health officer in the sum of three thousand dollars, executed by a surety company duly authorized to do business in the state, or by two good and sufficient sureties not connected in business with the applicant, and to be approved by the county health officer, guaranteeing the faithful performance of all work undertaken to be done under the provisions of the registration permit. Any person who may be damaged by the wrongful act or acts of the registrant or by his failure to perform any of the work agreed to be done covered by the terms of this chapter, shall in addition to other legal remedies have a right of action in his own name on such bond for all damages not exceeding three thousand dollars. Any claim shall be maintained under the bond only if the claimant shall serve upon the surety and the county health officer notice of the amount of such claim and the nature thereof, within six months after the principal on the bond has completed or abandoned the work giving rise to the claim, whereupon any bona fide payment of any such claim by the surety with prompt notice thereof to the county health officer shall reduce the amount of the bond by the amount so paid; provided, that if there is at one time more than one unliquidated claim under the bond, of which notice has been given as herein provided, and the total of such unliquidated claims exceeds the amount of the bond at that time, recovery shall be prorated so that the total of recoveries against the surety under any circumstances shall not exceed three thousand dollars, except as the bond may be reinstated by consent of the surety filed with the county health officer. Should at any time the registrant's bond be reduced below the three thousand dollar amount provided for in this section, regardless of the cause, his registration permit shall be suspended for the remaining portion of its yearly life until such time as the bond amount is brought back up to the three thousand dollars provided for herein.
(Ord. 31220, 1977: prior code §5.20.030).

15.08.040 Registration fee.

The registration fee shall be fifty dollars per year per vehicle, said incurred by the county health department in administering the provisions of this chapter. Registration shall be only for the unexpired portion of the calendar year in which the application is made and at the end of the calendar year all registrations shall become void and of no further effect; provided, that no registration fee or bond shall be required of any person performing work done upon his own premises; and provided further, that said person shall comply with all the rules and regulations of the county health department in disposing of said sewage.
(Prior code §5.20.040).

15.08.050 Permit--Revocation and appeal.

The registration permit may be revoked by the county health officer for failure of the registrant to comply with the provisions of this chapter and of any and all regulations made by the county health department. Any person feeling aggrieved because of said revocations may appeal to the board of county commissioners acting as the county board of health.
(Prior code §5.20.050).

15.08.060 Violation--Penalty.

Any person, firm or corporation violating the provisions of Sections 15.08.010 through 15.08.050 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.
(Prior code §5.20.060).

15.08.070 Pumpers--Compliance required.

All pumpers shall comply with the Whitman County Sewage Pumping Ordinance No. 16620, codified in Sections 15.08.010 through 15.08.060.
(Ord. 31218 §1, 1977).

15.08.080 Filing of bonds and fees.

All bonds and fees shall be filed with the county health office before pumping begins in the county.
(Ord. 31218 §2, 1977).

15.08.090 Pumping equipment.

All pumping equipment shall comply with the following requirements:

- A. All trucks shall be fitted with watertight valves and tanks.
- B. Sewage hoses on trucks shall be thoroughly drained, capped and stored in such a manner that the contents will not create a health hazard or nuisance.
- C. Pumping equipment shall not be used for any other purpose.

(Ord. 31218 §3, 1977).

15.08.100 Equipment operation and maintenance.

Equipment operation and maintenance shall conform with the following requirements:

- A. When in use, pumping equipment shall be so operated that a health hazard or a nuisance is not created.
- B. When not in use and parked, all such equipment shall be protected so that no odor or nuisance will be created.
- C. Equipment shall be maintained in a reasonably clean condition at all times.

(Ord. 31218 §4, 1977).

15.08.110 Disposal of sewage, sludge and wastewater.

Disposal of sewage, sludge and wastewater shall:

- A. Not be upon the surface of the ground unless it can be plowed under immediately;
- B. Not be into any body of water;
- C. Be only at the disposal facilities or treatment facilities authorized by the health officer. Disposal

may be made at other locations only upon written approval of the health officer.
(Ord. 31218 §5, 1977).

15.08.120 Spillage.

The person or persons doing the actual pumping or cleaning operation shall avoid spilling, pumping or dumping the contents into the immediate vicinity of the operation or the highway when transporting the contents for disposal. Any accidental spillage on the ground around the operation shall be cleaned up by the operator in such a manner as to render it harmless to humans and animals.
(Ord. 31218 §6, 1977).