

Performance Expectations for Pumpers and Pumper Firms

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Authority and Purpose

Authority

Thurston County Sanitary Code Article IV, Section 23, WAC 246-272A, and Thurston County Policies.

Purpose

The purpose of these expectations is to:

- Provide minimum standards for all septic professionals performing work in Thurston County.
- Ensure pumpers have access to the minimum expectations for keeping their certificate current.

CHAPTER 1: Expectations for Certification

To work as a pumper in Thurston County you must keep your certificate current. Listed in Article IV and highlighted below you will find the requirements to keep your certificate current.

How do I renew my certificate?

- Pumpers and Pumper firms must submit renewal applications to the department by December 31st of each year to keep certificates current. Applications received and postmarked by December 31st will be accepted without a late fee.
- Applications received and postmarked between December 31st and January 31st will accrue a late fee which must be paid before renewal.
- Fees must be received with the application.
- Renewal applications must be complete to be accepted.
- Applications received after January 31st must pay Initial Certification fees, meet all requirements for initial certification, and may be required to pass the Thurston County Pumper Exams

Pumper Application Submittal			
Requirements by submittal date	Submittal before Dec 31 st	Submittal between Dec 31 st & Jan 31 st	Submitted after Jan 31 st
Fee required	Renewal Fee Truck Inspection Fee	Renewal Fee Truck Inspection Fee Late Fee	Initial Certification Fee Truck Inspection Fee
Other requirements	CEU every 2 years	CEU every 2 years	Submit all requirements for Initial certification May be required to pass the Thurston County Pumper exam

What do I do for continuing education?

- Take an approved training in a subject related to On-Site Sewage Systems.
- Find a list of available classes by contacting:
 - Washington On-Site Sewage Association (WOSSA) www.wossa.org/classes.html
 - Thurston County Environmental Health at (360) 867-2626.
- Pumpers must take one continuing education class every two years.

How do I submit continuing education records?

- Submit your continuing education credits at the time of certificate renewal.
- Pumping firm must keep all records for employees continuing education.
- Every two years each pumper firm must submit credits
- Attach copies of employees continuing education credits to their renewal applications.
- One continuing education log can be used listing all employees with the classes taken.
- The continuing education log must state employee name, title of the class, class description, class date, and credits earned.

How do I get more employees Certified?

- New employees must submit the application with fees and pass an approved exam.
- Apply to add employees any time during the year.

What if there are changes to the business during the year?

- Submit an application with the business changes and we will update your records.
- Report addition or replacement of pumper trucks to pumper program staff as soon as possible.
- Application to add employees can be submitted at any time during the year.

CHAPTER 2: Expectations for Inspections and Pumping Tanks

What to do before going to a site?

- Pumpers must read and review *Article IV of Thurston County Sanitary code, Thurston County OSS policies, WAC 246-272, applicable RS&Gs, and Thurston County Pumper Manual.*
- Pumper firms must dispatch trucks from a location meeting all zoning and planning regulations.
- Pumper should have a copy of the record drawing with them when working on a site, if a record drawing is available.
- Print out a blank OnlineRME inspection form to ensure you inspect all components.
- Verify the septic components on the blank OnlineRME inspection form match the Record Drawing or what you observe on site.
- If the components on the Record Drawing don't match the blank inspection form, add or change the components in www.OnlineRME.com, or contact a Pumper Program staff member to adjust the components.
- Pumpers should review the area to determine how they will access the site with their equipment.

What is my authority and responsibility as a certified pumper in Thurston County?

- The certified professional must do the work or directly supervise the work of uncertified staff.
- Pumpers may pump and inspect for:
 1. Operational certificate renewals.
 2. Property sales (time of transfer).
 3. Permit reviews for the following types of systems:
 - a) Standard gravity.
 - b) Pump-to-gravity.
 - c) Standard pressure distribution.
 - d) Mound.
 - e) Proprietary Glendon systems.
- Working on sand-filters requires additional certification through WOSSA.
- Pumpers have authority to make repairs to on-site sewage systems, limited to those items listed in Thurston County Article IV Section 23.8.2:
 1. Pumping septage from a sewage tank or other OSS components.
 2. Transporting and disposing of the septage at sites that have been approved by the Health Officer.
 3. Inspecting levels of scum and solids in sewage tanks, pump chambers, and holding tanks.
 4. Inspecting sewage tank lids, baffles, walls, floors, pipe connections, risers, riser lids, locks, and seals.
 5. Inspecting pump fittings, wires, valves.
 6. Inspecting effluent screens and any other inspections of OSS components.
 7. Repairing or sealing cracks in sewage tanks over 900 gallon in size.
 8. Repairing or replacing baffles, or effluent screens.
 9. Repairing or replacing risers, riser lids, and locks.
 10. Installing risers.
 11. Resealing pipes.
 12. Replacing non-perforated pipe between a structure and a sewage tank.
 13. Replacing non-perforated pipe between sewage tanks.

- 14. Replacing non-perforated pipe between a sewage tank and a soil dispersal component.
- 15. Inspecting ponding levels and monitoring port condition in a soil dispersal component.
- 16. Inspecting ponding levels and monitoring port condition in other OSS components.
- 17. Inspecting monitoring port condition.
- No Terra-lift operations are allowed in Thurston County without a permit.

What does Thurston require when I pump a tank?

- Pump the septic tank when the sludge and scum combined are more than one-third the tank volume.
- Determine when to pump a septic tank using the method and criteria in the department brochure *"Inspecting Your Septic Tank: It's not so bad...really!"*. A copy of the brochure is available on the department web site at www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehoss/inspect_septic.html.
- If the tank needs pumping, all compartments must be pumped, even if only one compartment has too much sludge or scum.
- Tanks must be pumped through manhole lids. Do not pump through the baffle inspection ports to prevent damage.
- Pump tanks should be pumped if the sludge accumulation is high enough to reach the intake of the pump.
- Clean the inlet and outlet baffles. They can be scraped or sprayed.
- Clean the effluent filters, when present. Rinse filters with water into the first compartment of the septic tank.
- Metal tanks must pass a 24-hour watertight test to be allowed for continued use.
- If a Thurston County Environmental Health inspection is required the main tank's lids, inlet, and outlet lids should be left unburied if below grade.
- The following conditions will trigger a Thurston County follow-up inspection:
 - A tank repair has been completed and the tank passed the 24-hour watertight test. All repaired tanks should be left unburied, so Thurston County can review the liquid level.
 - A minor repair has been completed. Confirm with program staff if a Health Department follow-up inspection will be performed.
 - If the homeowner completed a repair.
- ALL LIDS MUST BE SECURED BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE VICINITY OF THE TANKS.
- ALL LIDS MUST BE SECURED BEFORE YOU LEAVE A SITE.

What if I Find a Leaking Tank?

- All tanks must be watertight. Leaking tanks 900 gallons in size or more must be repaired or replaced
- Multiple repairs may be made to the same tank.
- Leaking tanks under 900 gallons in size cannot be repaired and must be replaced.
- Metal tanks found leaking must be replaced.
- All tanks that have been repaired must pass a 24-hour watertight test to be certified as watertight. The certified professional must verify in person the condition of the tank after at least 24 hours.
- Tanks that cannot pass the 24-hour watertight test must be replaced.
- Tank replacement requires a permit and installation by a Certified Installer.

CHAPTER 3: Expectations for Reporting Work

What to report?

- All septic pumping and inspections done in Thurston County must be submitted electronically.
- Paper reports will not be accepted (as of January 1, 2011).
- Always report the status of the system as you observe it. The inspection and pump reports must be filled out accurately.
- For inspections submitted to renew an operational certificate, all components of the on-site sewage system must be inspected.
- Always report deficiencies if found, even when they are corrected during your visit.
 - Use the comment field to indicate repairs made or problems not addressed while on site.
 - If deficiencies are not repaired during your site visit, mark them *deficient* on the RME report and explain in the comments.
 - If you were able to repair the deficiencies, mark *corrected* on the RME report and explain in the comments.
- Falsely reported conditions will be subject to investigation and possible disciplinary action.

When to report?

- You must submit pump and inspection reports by the 10th of the month following the work.
- Late submittals will be subject to disciplinary action.

Where to report?

- Reports **must** be submitted electronically through www.OnlineRME.com.
- The owner must receive documentations about the pumping or inspection you completed.
- The record for the owner can be an enhanced receipt or a paper copy of the electronic report.

How long to keep your records?

- Records of all Pumper work must be maintained at the Pumper's place of business for a period of three years and must be made available for inspection upon request by the Health Officer.

CHAPTER 4: Department Contacts

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