

Thurston County  
Environmental Health Policies & Procedures

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Page: 1 of 2

Number: ONST.13.POL.846

Title: Thurston County Environmental Health (TCEH) Policy for Owner Certification to Self-inspect On-site Sewage Systems

Related: ONST.10.POL.808

Approved:   
Environmental Health Director  
Date: 11/21/13

Cancels: ONST.10.POL.846

RCW/Code:

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**This policy applies to on-site sewage systems (OSS) in Thurston County that are outside of the Henderson & Nisqually Reach Watershed Protection Area boundaries and do not serve food service establishments.**

**Purpose:** This policy documents the qualifications, demonstration of knowledge, and conditions that TCEH requires of onsite sewage system (OSS) owners requesting to be certified to inspect their own OSS for the purpose of renewing an operational certificate.

1. **The OSS owner requesting certification must complete and submit an application and answer OSS-knowledge questions on a form provided by TCEH.**
2. **The OSS owner must demonstrate that they have a combination of OSS-related education, certifications, licenses, and/or relevant work experience, AND that they are knowledgeable in the function, inspection, and maintenance of OSS. Completion of the Henderson/Nisqually Reach Watershed Protection Area owner/inspector certification training, by itself, does not satisfy this requirement.**
3. **TCEH will evaluate the application to determine if the owner should be certified to self-inspect their OSS. Professional judgment will be used to determine adequacy of qualifications based on a combination of the following:**
  - A. Applicant has a current professional license(s) or certification(s) in a relevant field, such as professional engineer, licensed OSS designer, licensed plumber, or registered sanitarian; AND/OR
  - B. Applicant holds, or held, a position where they perform(ed) maintenance, installation, and/or inspection activities related to OSS or wastewater treatment systems. The experience must have been within the state of Washington and within the last 5 years, and the applicant must have held that position for at least two years; AND/OR
  - C. Applicant has completed courses or training in OSS or wastewater treatment function, design, and maintenance from a recognized educational institution or OSS professional organization. Attendance at a county sponsored septic system workshop does not, by itself, satisfy this requirement; AND

**Thurston County  
Environmental Health Policies & Procedures**

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**ONST.13.POL.846**

**Page: 2 of 2**

- D. The applicant demonstrated their OSS-knowledge by satisfactorily answering all of the questions on the application.

**4. A condition of owner-inspector certification is dependent on the following:**

- A. Owner agrees to allow TCEH to conduct quality assurance inspections, by appointment,
- B. The owner inspections are complete and accurate, and
- C. The owner complies with all conditions of the operational certificate and renews the operational certificate as required in accordance with Article IV.

**5. TCEH will grant certification to the owner to inspect their OSS at a specific address(es) if the owner is determined to meet the qualifications listed in section 3 above and the owner agrees to the conditions in section 4 above.**

**6. TCEH will consider, on a case by case basis, requests by qualified individuals for certification to perform the operational certificate renewal inspection for an OSS owned by their elderly or disabled parent or immediate family member.**

**7. TCEH will revoke the owner-inspector certification if the owner fails to meet the conditions in section 4.**