

OhioEPA

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NEWS RELEASE

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Household Sewage Treatment System General Permit Finalized

Ohio EPA has issued a general permit for household sewage treatment system discharges that will allow local health departments to work directly with homeowners to evaluate and assist them in obtaining all necessary permits to install and operate the systems.

Local health departments will perform all site inspections, recommend the type of system that can be installed and determine if coverage by the new general permit is needed. If the local health department determines that a discharge is necessary, the local health department will inform homeowners of the process to follow to obtain permit coverage from Ohio EPA.

Local health departments will be required to sign a memorandum of understanding with Ohio EPA giving them authority to consider and approve the installation of discharging household sewage treatment systems. The permit coordinates with the Ohio Department of Health's (ODH) new home sewage treatment system rules that go into effect on January 1, 2007. The ODH rules were developed according to the requirements of House Bill 231.

All household sewage discharges to waters of the state require a discharge permit. The new ODH rules allow the use of a discharge system only if the use of a non-discharging on-site system is not possible.

The new general permit covers systems serving one-, two- or three-family residential dwellings. The permit applies to discharging systems that are necessary for limited new construction or for existing systems that have failed and need to be replaced, only if the installation and operation of a non-discharging on-site system is not possible.

New discharges will not be permitted to streams or rivers designated as superior high quality waters, outstanding state waters, or outstanding national resource waters, or as discharges to storm sewers, roadside ditches, agricultural ditches or other manmade drainage systems. Ohio EPA recommends that new discharges from household sewage treatment systems only be allowed to go into streams with a continual flow of water and a minimum watershed drainage area of five square miles.

Ohio EPA is considering the development of a second general permit that will be used to provide coverage to select existing dischargers.

Statewide general permits have a five-year duration and are reviewed and revised as needed at the end of that period. If an applicant follows the new ODH rules, their application will generally comply with the requirements outlined in the general permit.

Copies of the general permit applications and memorandum of understanding are available on the Web at <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dsw/permits/gpfact.html>, or by calling Mark Stump in Ohio EPA's Division of Surface Water at (614) 644-2028.

Finalized permits can be appealed to the Environmental Review Appeals Commission (ERAC). Appeals must be filed by January 31, 2007. Ohio EPA recommends that anyone wishing to file an appeal contact ERAC at (614) 466-8950 for more information.

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