

**Onsite Sewage Disposal System Septic Tanks – Policy for Setback from Wells
for
Repairs, Modifications or Corrective Measures**

Section 3.1(2)(b) of the *Sewerage System Regulation* requires an onsite sewage system setback distance (including septic tanks) of no less than 30m from wells which supply domestic water. This provision applies to the construction of **new** onsite systems, and can be varied by a professional competent in the area of hydrogeology. Systems are considered to be ‘new’ if the filing documents relevant to their construction were submitted to the Health Authority by Authorized Persons on **or after June 25, 2010**.

Section 3.1 generally does **not** apply to systems which were **legally** constructed before June 25, 2010, or to systems which had filings submitted to the Health Authority **before June 25, 2010**. This policy is reflected in more detail on the MHS website in the link titled ‘Sewerage System Regulation Amendments’ at <http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/protect/pdf/Sewerage-System-Regulation-Amendments-OIC476.pdf>)

The policy on the following page is intended to provide clarification regarding how Section 3.1 applies to septic tanks requiring *repairs, modifications, or other corrective measures* (as deemed necessary by Authorized Persons or homeowners). This policy also addresses the requirements for septic tanks based on property redevelopment or expansion proposals.

Policy for Repairs, Modifications or Corrective Measures to Onsite Sewerage Systems

- 1) Sewerage system repairs are to be carried out in accordance with the *Sewerage System Regulation* and acceptable standard practice.
- 2) **Existing** onsite sewerage systems -- installed in accordance with the legislation before June 25, 2010 -- which require repairs or other corrective measures and maintain the original daily design flow, are **not** required to meet section 3.1 of the *Sewerage System Regulation*.
- 3) **Existing** onsite sewage system septic tanks -- installed in accordance with legislation before June 25, 2010 -- which require replacement and/or additional septic tank(s) to be installed in series, are **not** required to meet section 3.1 if the upgrade is to address a performance issue with the system, while maintaining the original daily design flow. Examples of performance issues may include leaking or overflowing tanks, clogged influent/effluent lines, or tanks which have shifted or settled -- negatively impacting effluent flow. Performance issues are to be considered separately from increased capacity requirements due to new property development.
- 4) **All existing** onsite sewage systems which require replacement or additional septic tanks to increase capacity for new developments are required to meet s.3.1 of the *Sewerage System Regulation*. Examples of new developments which may require increased capacity include:
 - i. The addition of new detached structures on the property.
 - ii. The redevelopment of an existing property from single to multiple dwellings (duplex to fourplex, for example).
 - iii. The addition of new suites or bedrooms to an existing structure.

A new filing under s.8 of the *Sewerage System Regulation* is required in this case.

- 5) **Existing** onsite sewage systems requiring replacement or additional septic tanks (to increase capacity for new developments) for which 'repair' filings were received and date-stamped by the health authority before June 25, 2010 are **not** required to meet section 3.1.
- 6) All illegally-installed systems (i.e. without the involvement of an authorized person, or filing submitted to the health authority) are required to have a filing and comply with all provisions of the *Sewerage System Regulation*, including section 3.1.