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Frederick County Health Department

Change in Environmental Health Procedures

FREDERICK, MD (JULY 18, 2022) -- The Frederick County Health Department's Division of Environmental Health Services (EHS) is revising procedural requirements related to the issuance of permits for on-site sewage disposal systems (OSDS). The role of the health department will no longer be to prepare plans pursuant to the issuance of an OSDS permit. Instead, the EHS will act only as a reviewing and permitting agency concerning the plans submitted on or after August 1, 2022. This is due to a directive from the Maryland Department of the Environment that plans for OSDS must be developed and submitted for approval by qualified private sector designers. These designers can include septic contractors, other OSDS professionals, or engineers.

Plans for engineered systems such as sand mounds, at-grade systems, pressure dosed trenches, and innovative systems currently are required to be prepared by qualified private sector designers. This policy will now extend to all OSDS, including less complex conventional systems that rely on gravity distribution methods. The EHS will still be engaged in the process by providing designers with the test results and site evaluation data that designs are based on. The criteria for acceptable designs are found in the Code of Maryland Regulations, COMAR Chapter 26.04.02: Sewage Disposal and Certain Water Systems for Homes and Other Establishments Where a Public Sewage System is Not Available. The regulations can be found at <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/COMAR/ComarHome.html>.

Plans will need to be approved by the EHS prior to building permit approval being granted, so builders can expect increased review times if plans are not prepared and submitted at the time of building permit application submissions. The EHS will continue to provide site evaluation data for projects, provide preliminary specifications for use by OSDS designers, and as necessary, training for interested OSDS designers in order to implement this policy as effectively as possible. Please contact EHS at 301-600-1726 for additional information.

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