

KNOW THE FACTS!

Home Sewage Treatment System (HSTS) NPDES permits

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program addresses water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants to waters of the United States.

Created in 1972 by the Clean Water Act, the NPDES permit program is authorized to state governments by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to perform many permitting, administrative, and enforcement aspects of the program.

What is a NPDES permit?

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act, the Ohio Water Pollution Control Act and the Ohio Revised Code (ORC Chapter 6111) provide that discharge of pollutants to waters of the state from any point source is unlawful, unless the discharge is in compliance with an effective NPDES permit.

The Ohio EPA (OEPA) issued the general NPDES permit to provide a process for replacement household sewage systems that discharge treated sewage effluent to gain compliance with the provisions of the Federal Clean Water Pollution Control Act.

Who needs a NPDES permit?

OEPA has issued a statewide general permit to provide coverage of discharges from replacement, new and/or updated HSTSs (beginning January 1st, 2007, HSTSs prior to this date are not included) in situations where on-site dispersal of the wastewaters is not an option.

What is the process for applying for coverage under an NPDES general permit?

When authorized by the health department, homeowners may submit a notice of intent application (NOI) to discharge and become authorized by OEPA to discharge under the statewide general permit. Once authorized, OEPA will issue a notice of coverage under the statewide general permit.

Is there a fee for the NPDES permit?

OEPA does charge an application fee of \$200 when the NOI is submitted. The permit must be renewed at the end of each permit cycle, there is no renewal fee at this time.

I purchased a home with an existing sewage treatment system, where do I find my NPDES permit?

All NPDES permitted HSTS are under a general permit. The permit can be found on OEPA's website: <https://epa.ohio.gov/portals/35/permits/OHK00003-FINAL%20PERMIT.pdf>

As the new homeowner, you are responsible for updating the ownership information with the OEPA. You can visit OEPA's website to download the ownership transfer form:

https://epa.ohio.gov/dsw/permits/GP_HouseholdSewageTreatmentPlants

Once the form is completed, submit the form to OEPA. Forms can be mailed to:

*Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water
P.O. Box 1049, Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049*

Completed forms may also be email to Anthony Nosko at anthony.nosko@epa.ohio.gov

I have an NPDES permit for my HSTS. What are my responsibilities under the NPDES permit?

As the permittee, you are responsible for:

- Ensuring the HSTS is operational and serviced under contract by your chosen service provider (the service provider must have the system manufacturers training/certification)
- Ensuring discharging effluent meets NPDES permit standards by obtaining routine effluent samples.
- Ensuring ownership information is up to date



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Contracts and sample results must be submitted to HCPH. All responsibilities are listed in the permit.

Effluent Sampling

How often should I have my HSTS effluent sampled?

HSTS need to be sampled once, annually under the NPDES permit. Samples must be done prior to your annual HSTS inspection conducted by your Hamilton County Public Health inspector. You will receive a post card in the mail, 30-60 days ahead of your inspection. When you receive the post card, you should schedule your effluent samples if you have not done so already for that year.

Some HSTS have additional treatment devices and may be exempt from annual sampling. These HSTS still require sampling but have a different sampling schedule under the NPDES permit. Please contact your inspector to see if your HSTS has any of these treatment devices allowing for the annual exemption.

Who do I contact to sample my HSTS effluent?

A service provider must obtain and analyze the effluent samples. By law, all service providers must be registered with the local health department to perform service on HSTS. In Hamilton County, there are two service providers registered with the capabilities to obtain and analyze effluent samples. These registered service providers are:

Quality Labs, Inc.	851 Mill St Hamilton, OH 45013 513-225-8378
Winelco, Inc.	6141 Centre Park Dr West Chester, OH 45069 513-755-8050

If you are interested in more information, please contact Hamilton County Public Health, Division of Water Quality at (513) 946-7966.



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What parameters are being tested from my effluent sample?

The NPDES permit requires that all HSTS meet the same design effluent standards. Effluent samples that do not meet the design effluent standards, are considered failing.

Parameter	Design Effluent Standard
Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	< 18 mg/L
Nitrogen, Ammonia (NH ₃) Summer	< 2 mg/L
Nitrogen, Ammonia (NH ₃) Winter	< 4.5 mg/L
CBOD ₅	< 15 mg/L
E. coli	< 410 #/100ml
Dissolved Oxygen	> 6.0 mg/L

My effluent sample failed, what do I do now?

Contact a registered service provider to troubleshoot the cause of elevated pollutants. The service provider must submit a report to Hamilton County Public Health documenting what measures were taken to ensure the system is meeting design standard. Additional sampling may be required.



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