

Name of Practice: CONVENTIONAL ONSITE SEWAGE SYSTEM REPAIR  
DEQ Specifications for No. RB-3

A. Description

Improvements to a conventional onsite sewage system to remove the presence of raw or partially treated sewage on the ground's surface, to prevent sewage from entering adjacent ditches or waterways, or potentially impacting ground water. A conventional onsite sewage system refers to a treatment works consisting of one or more septic tanks with gravity, pumped, or siphoned conveyance to a gravity subsurface drainfield.

B. Purpose

To improve water quality by removing raw or partially treated sewage on the land surface that can enter surface water or ground water during storm events, or sewage that is direct source of contamination to surface water or ground water. Sewage means water-carried and non-water-carried human excrement; kitchen, laundry, shower, bath, or lavatory wastes separately, or together.

C. Policies

1. Cost-share is authorized:

- a. For the pumpout and removal of solids from the septic tank.
- b. For inspection of the distribution box or multiple boxes to determine if the effluent is being properly distributed to the drainfield, and to assess if components of the system are functioning properly.
- c. For repair and or partial replacement of the following components of a conventional onsite sewage system: septic tank, distribution box or boxes, header lines, and partial replacement of absorption lines (for full replacement of absorption lines use RB-4 or RB-4P). Repairs also include the re-leveling of sanitary tees and distribution box, flushing of conveyance and header lines and removing roots from septic tank or distribution box.
- d. For connecting a gray water discharge from a dwelling that is discharging on the ground, or in a wet/dry ditch, to the existing conventional onsite sewage system. If the gray water discharge cannot be connected to the existing system and a separate system needs to be installed that would be cost-shared as a

system installation (RB-4 or RB-4P). Any plumbing that is necessary inside the dwelling to make the gray water connection to the onsite system is not eligible for cost-share.

- e. To re-stabilize and establish a vegetative cover on disturbed areas by planting seed.
2. A sewage system repair must be in accordance to a written construction permit (there is no state permit fee to file a repair application) from the Virginia Department of Health and inspection from the Virginia Department of Health, or a private Onsite Soil Evaluator (OSE) or Professional Engineer (PE). There are several maintenance repairs which includes flushing of conveyance and header lines and cleaning roots out of septic tank or distribution box that do not require a repair permit.
3. Disturbed areas need to be stabilized by planting seed in accordance with the Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Standard and Specifications 3.31 (Permanent Seeding) and Specification 3.35 (Mulching). For slopes of 3:1 or greater use 3.36 (Blankets and Matting).
4. The repair must be maintained for a minimum of 10 years following the calendar year of installation.
5. If the old septic tank is not useable it should be properly abandoned by a septic tank contractor or plumber. The septic tank is pumped out, tank lids are crushed and dumped in tank, and the tank is filled with sand or other suitable fill material.
6. The repair must include a copy of a malfunction assessment completed by either VDH, OSE, or a PE.

#### D. Rate

The cost-share payment will not exceed 50% to 75% of the total eligible cost based on income levels in accordance with *Program Design and Guidelines, TMDL – Cost-Share Assistance Program for On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems*. The cost-share payment for all income levels will be based on the system repair cost not exceeding \$4,675 and the maximum cost-share amount shall not exceed \$3,500.

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