

CONVENTIONAL ONSITE SEWAGE SYSTEM
FULL INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE
DEQ Specifications for No. RB-3M

This document specifies terms and conditions that are applicable to all contracts entered into with respect to the *Conventional Onsite Sewage System Full Inspection and Maintenance* best management practice (BMP) in NPS implementation areas.

A. Description

Maintenance actions 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 groundwater. This is maintenance of a conventional onsite sewage system that ensures the system functions properly and/or avoids failure and does not require a VDH-issued permit to complete. Includes performing adjustments (e.g., re-leveling) or replacement of worn parts that do not require a construction permit for adjustment or replacement of the component such as motors, pumps, sewer lines, conveyance lines, distribution boxes, header lines or other like components. Maintenance also includes the removal of tree roots from septic tanks and distribution boxes. Maintenance does not include replacement of tanks, drainfield piping, subsurface drainfields, or work requiring a construction permit or licensed septic system installer.

B. Purpose

To correct noted deficiencies of a conventional sewage system as determined by completion of a Septic System Inspection Form and inspection by an authorized entity (referring to a contractor).

C. Policies and Specifications

1. Cost-share is authorized:

- i. For the pump-out and removal of solids from the septic tank.
- ii. For inspection of the distribution box or multiple boxes, or other components of the system to determine if the effluent is being properly distributed to the drainfield, and to assess if components of the system are functioning properly.
- iii. For "maintenance" (as defined in [32.1VAC6-1-163 \(§32.1-163\)](#) Code of Virginia) of the components of a conventional onsite sewage system. Authorized maintenance work includes re-leveling sanitary tees and distribution box(es), flushing conveyance and header lines, replacing motors, replacing a cracked septic tank lid and removing roots from septic tank or distribution box.
- iv. To re-stabilize and establish a vegetative cover on disturbed areas by regrading and planting seed as appropriate. 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). For the cost associated with design components of the system using an appropriately licensed Conventional Onsite Soil Evaluator (if necessary; VDH determines when OSE is required for a design for a maintenance component).

2. Operation and Maintenance Statement: Acceptance of payment for this practice results in the recipient agreeing to maintain the onsite septic system for a minimum of five (5) years unless the system is eliminated by connection to public sewer (RB-2). The recipient agrees to refund all or part of the funds received if the practice is found not to meet applicable standards and specifications or if the BMP(s) is/are removed or not properly maintained during the lifespan of the practice. The sale, lease, or changed use of the property will not exempt the recipient from fulfilling this/these requirement(s). Should the property change ownership or leasehold during the lifespan of the practice, the recipient agrees to complete an Agreement Transferring Responsibility for Best Management Practice form signed by all involved parties and submit that signed form to the Grantee identified in this agreement. More information on operation and maintenance can be found in the DEQ BMP manual and the Residential Septic Guidelines.
3. Exemption to the operation and maintenance requirement: An exemption to the above-referenced operation and maintenance requirement may be granted by the Grantee (with approval from DEQ) in the event that a participant decides to connect the system to public sewer (RB-2).
 - i. Connection to Public Sewer: The participant is not eligible for cost-share on the RB-2. However, if an exemption is granted, the participant will not be responsible for paying back the prorated cost-share amount remaining on the lifespan of the existing BMP if the participant agrees to maintain the new RB-2 practice for 10 years.
4. Cost-Share Applications for “maintenance” (non-permitted) repairs must include a copy of [the Septic System Inspection Form](#) completed by VDH, OSE, a licensed installer, or a licensed operator (if applicable).
5. “Assignment of Residential Septic Practice Cost-Share Authorization” and “Agreement Transferring Responsibility for Best Management Practice” forms for this practice are attached to the Residential Septic Guidelines.
6. The lifespan for this practice is dependent on the level of maintenance action. The lifespan for replacing filters and/or pumps, removing roots from a septic tank and/or distribution box, flushing conveyance and header lines, and/or re-leveling a distribution box is five (5) years (Level 1). The lifespan for replacing sewer, header, and/or conveyance lines, and/or replacing a distribution box is 10 years (Level 2). The period of lifespan starts on January 1 of the calendar year following the year of installation of the practice.
7. Cost-share is not authorized:
 - i. For maintenance that stems from construction of new septic system or existing system upgrade on a lot to accommodate replacement of a residence with a new house or mobile home, nor for the permitted expansion of an existing septic system to accommodate the addition of a bedroom(s) being added to a residence.
 - ii. For the replacement of light bulbs and fuses, despite those components being included as “maintenance” (as defined in [32.1VAC6-1-163 \(§32.1-163\)](#) Code of Virginia), as their replacement does not have a direct water quality benefit.

D. Rate

The cost-share amount is based upon an average maximum cost of \$4,000 per practice and will not exceed 50% to 90% of the total eligible cost based on participant income levels (based upon verification) in accordance with *Virginia's Nonpoint Source (NPS) Implementation Best Management Practice (BMP) Guidelines*. The cost-share payment for this practice shall not exceed the BMP estimated average total cost-share cost, known as the practice cap, associated with the approved cost-share rate for the participant.

A Grantee will request from DEQ the ability to use either the No Fiscal Stress or Fiscal Stress table (see tables RB-3M.1 through RB-3M.3 below):

Table RB-3M.1: Conventional Onsite Sewage System Full Inspection and Maintenance Residential Septic Practice Levels, Lifespan, Practice Cost, and Cost-share Rate

Practice Component	Lifespan	Total Practice Cost	Cost-share Rate
Level 1: Any of the following: Inspection of the distribution box or multiple boxes, or other components of the system, replacing filters and/or pumps, removing roots from a septic tank, distribution box and/or drainfield, flushing conveyance and header lines, and/or re-leveling a distribution box. Tree removal is permitted to prevent root encroachment in the drainfield and/or other system component	5 years	\$2,000	Depending on Income and Fiscal Stress (see Table RB-3M.2)
Level 2: Any items above plus at least one of the following: replacing sewer, header and/or conveyance lines, and/or replacing a distribution box	10 years	\$4,000	Depending on Income and Fiscal Stress (see Table RB-3M.3)

Table RB-3M.2: Level 1 Residential Septic Cost-share Table Conventional Onsite Sewage System Full Inspection and Maintenance, rates based upon average total practice cost of \$2,000; lifespan of 5 years.

% of Median Family Income	No Fiscal Stress* Rate	No Fiscal Stress* CS Cap	Fiscal Stress** Rate	Fiscal Stress** CS Cap
> 120% or no income verification	50%	\$1,000	50%	\$1,000
100-120%	55%	\$1,100	65%	\$1,300
81-100%	60%	\$1,200	70%	\$1,400
61-80%	65%	\$1,300	75%	\$1,500
40-60%	75%	\$1,500	85%	\$1,700
<40%	80%	\$1,600	90%	\$1,800

* Located in locality with No Fiscal Stress (average, below average, or no FS)

** Located in Locality with Fiscal Stress (high or above average FS)

Table RB-3M.3: Level 2 Residential Septic Cost-share Table Conventional Onsite Sewage System Full Inspection and Maintenance, rates based upon average total practice cost of \$4,000; lifespan of 10 years.

% of Median Family Income	No Fiscal Stress* Rate	No Fiscal Stress* CS Cap	Fiscal Stress** Rate	Fiscal Stress** CS Cap
> 120% or no income verification	50%	\$2,000	50%	\$2,000
100-120%	55%	\$2,200	65%	\$2,600
81-100%	60%	\$2,400	70%	\$2,800
61-80%	65%	\$2,600	75%	\$3,000
40-60%	75%	\$3,000	85%	\$3,400
<40%	80%	\$3,200	90%	\$3,600

* Located in locality with No Fiscal Stress (average, below average, or no FS)

** Located in Locality with Fiscal Stress (high or above average FS)

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