



Ohio Revised Code

Section 3718.02 Director of health to adopt administrative rules; board of health may adopt more stringent rules.

Effective: September 10, 2012

Legislation: House Bill 487 - 129th General Assembly

(A) The director of health, in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code, shall adopt, and subsequently may amend and rescind, rules of general application throughout the state to administer this chapter. Rules adopted under division (A) of this section shall do at least all of the following:

(1) Require that the appropriate board of health approve or disapprove the installation, operation, and alteration of a sewage treatment system if it is not connected to a sanitary sewerage system;

(2) Require a board of health, or other person as established by rule, to conduct a site evaluation for any proposed installation of a sewage treatment system;

(3) Prescribe standards for the siting, design, installation, operation, monitoring, maintenance, and abandonment of sewage treatment systems that may be used in this state and for the progressive or incremental alteration or repair of an existing sewage treatment system or the progressive or incremental installation of a new system to replace an existing sewage treatment system. The rules shall be adopted so as to establish a preference for the repair of an existing sewage treatment system, when technically and economically feasible, rather than its replacement with a new system. The standards shall include at a minimum all of the following:

(a) Soil absorption specifications and vertical separation distances.

(i) Soil absorption specifications established in rules shall include standards regarding the sizing of sewage treatment systems in use in the state.

(ii) In establishing soil absorption specifications and vertical separation distances, the rules shall identify those soil conditions that present a low or moderate risk of inadequate treatment or dispersal of sewage from sewage treatment systems. For low and moderate risk conditions, the required vertical separation distance shall not exceed eighteen inches except as authorized pursuant



to rules adopted under divisions (A)(3)(a)(iii) and (iv) of this section.

In addition, the rules shall identify those soil conditions that present a high risk of inadequate treatment or dispersal of sewage. For such high risk conditions, the vertical separation distance shall be set at a depth from twenty-four to thirty-six inches and shall not be lowered unless a reduction of vertical separation is granted in accordance with rules adopted under division (A)(3)(a)(iii) of this section.

(iii) The rules shall establish options to be utilized by a board of health when approving the reductions of or compliance with vertical separation distances that are established in rules adopted under division (A)(3)(a)(ii) of this section. The options for a board of health in providing such approval shall include, but not be limited to: the use where deemed appropriate for a particular site of subsurface interceptor drains, perimeter drains, or engineered drainage; pretreatment of sewage; or soil elevation.

(iv) The rules shall provide that a board of health may petition the director to increase the vertical separation distances required for sewage treatment systems in the applicable health district or a portion of the district when conditions present a high risk of inadequate treatment or dispersal of sewage. The rules also shall provide that the director may approve such a request upon a demonstration by the board of health that unusual or unique local conditions relating to terrain, bedrock, water table, soil fragments, or soil textures require the establishment of greater vertical separation distances within the jurisdiction of the board of health or a portion thereof. If, under the rules, the director of health approves a greater vertical separation distance, a board of health still may approve a reduction of that vertical separation distance for an individual sewage treatment system pursuant to rules adopted under division (A)(3)(a)(iii) of this section. Further, if, under the rules, the director approves a greater vertical separation distance, a person who is denied permission by a board of health to install or replace a sewage treatment system as a result of the director's approval may request a hearing in accordance with section 3718.11 of the Revised Code.

(b) Specifications for the quality of treated sewage effluent from household sewage treatment systems that is applied to soil on the property where a household sewage treatment system is located. The specifications established in the rules for the quality of effluent from discharging systems shall comply with discharge requirements imposed by the national pollutant discharge



elimination system permit program established under section 6111.03 of the Revised Code and rules adopted under it.

(c) Requirements for the reasonable maintenance of a system according to maintenance requirements approved by the director of health as recommended by the sewage treatment system technical advisory committee or according to accepted standards and practices established in rules, as applicable. The requirements may include standards for service contracts or other arrangements that assure regular maintenance and upkeep of the system. In determining the reasonableness of a maintenance requirement, the director shall consider a manufacturer's maintenance requirements as well as all other maintenance alternatives.

(4) Prescribe procedures for notification to boards of health of the approval of a sewage treatment system or components of a system by the director of health under section 3718.04 of the Revised Code;

(5) Prescribe criteria and procedures under which boards of health shall issue installation permits, operation permits, and alteration permits for sewage treatment systems. The rules shall require as a condition of an installation permit that the installer of a system must warrant that the system was installed in accordance with all applicable rules and design requirements. In addition, the rules shall require a board of health, not later than sixty days after the issuance of an installation, operation, or alteration permit, to notify the director that the permit was issued. The rules shall require the notification to be in a format prescribed by the director and to include information related to the issuance of the permit. With the assistance of the department of health, a board of health, to the extent practicable, shall computerize the process of the issuance of permits for sewage treatment systems.

(6) Require a board of health to inspect a sewage treatment system not later than twelve months after its installation to ensure that the system is operating properly. The rules shall require a board of health, not later than sixty days after the inspection, to certify to the director on a form provided by the director that the inspection was performed.

(7) Require each board of health to develop a program for the administration of maintenance requirements established in rules adopted under division (A)(3)(c) of this section. The rules shall



include requirements and procedures under which a person may demonstrate the required maintenance of a system in lieu of having an inspection conducted when an inspection otherwise is required. The rules shall require a board of health to provide written notice to a person that is demonstrating maintenance of a system in lieu of an inspection that if proof of the required maintenance of the system is not provided as required by rules, the system is subject to inspection by the board and the reasonable cost of the inspection must be paid by the person. The rules shall authorize a board of health to inspect any sewage treatment system if there is a good-faith complaint regarding the system, there is probable cause for the inspection, or proof of the required maintenance of the system has not been provided as required by rules. In addition, the rules shall authorize a board of health to inspect a sewage treatment system without prior notice in any instance in which the board has probable cause to believe that the system is endangering or threatening to endanger public health. The rules shall require that the reasonable costs for sewage effluent testing or evaluation be paid by the owner of a sewage treatment system that is being investigated. Further, the rules shall establish a methodology for determining the reasonable costs of an inspection in accordance with section 3709.09 of the Revised Code. The rules shall allow, but shall not require, a board of health to continue an inspection program that was established by the board prior to the effective date of the rules, provided that the program authorizes a person to demonstrate the required maintenance of a system in lieu of an inspection.

(8) Require a board of health to register installers, service providers, and septage haulers that perform work within the health district; prescribe criteria and procedures for the registration; and prescribe criteria for a demonstration of competency as a part of the registration. The rules shall establish uniform statewide bonding requirements or other financial security requirements for installers, service providers, and septage haulers as a condition of registration within any health district. The rules shall establish a methodology by which the required amount of a bond or other security may be calculated for each installer, service provider, and septage hauler. The methodology, at a minimum, shall consider the number of systems installed or serviced and the type of system installed or serviced by an installer, service provider, or septage hauler on an annual basis. The rules shall provide that no board of health shall require an additional or different bond or security requirement as a condition of registration beyond the bonding and security requirements established in the rules adopted under division (A)(8) of this section.

The rules shall establish a cost methodology for determining the fee for the registration of an



installer, service provider, or septage hauler in any health district.

(9) Prescribe requirements for the collection, transportation, disposal, and land application of domestic septage in this state from a sewage treatment system;

(10) Require boards of health to maintain records that are determined necessary to ascertain compliance with this chapter and the rules adopted under it;

(11) Require the manufacturer of a sewage treatment system that is authorized for use in this state in rules adopted under this section or that is approved for use in this state under section 3718.04 of the Revised Code to provide instructions for the operation and maintenance of the system. The rules shall provide that a board of health may require a copy of a manufacturer's instructions for the operation and maintenance of a system to be filed with the board prior to the installation and use of the system in the health district in which the board has jurisdiction. In addition, the rules shall require a board of health and a manufacturer to provide a copy of the operation and maintenance instructions, if available, when a board of health or a manufacturer receives a written request for instructions.

(12) Prescribe criteria for the provision of written evidence of compliance with rules pertaining to sewage treatment for purposes of sections 711.05 and 711.10 of the Revised Code;

(13) Pursuant to divisions (A)(1) and (3) of this section, prescribe standards for the siting, design, installation, operation, monitoring, maintenance, and abandonment of small flow on-site sewage treatment systems that may be used in this state;

(14) Prescribe minimum criteria and procedures under which boards of health may establish household sewage treatment district management programs for the purpose of providing a responsive approach toward preventing or solving sewage treatment problems resulting from household sewage treatment systems within the districts established under the program. For purposes of division (A)(14) of this section, a board of health may enter into a contract with any entity to administer a household sewage treatment district management program.

(15) Prescribe standards for the use of subsurface interceptor drains, perimeter drains, and



engineered drainage to remove or divert any subsurface water from an area to be used for soil absorption of sewage in the soil of a sewage treatment system;

(16) Prescribe standards for the inspection of septage hauling truck tanks by boards of health, including, but not limited to, tank seal safety specifications;

(17) Establish standards and testing methods to ensure that all septic tanks, other disposal component tanks, dosing tanks, pump vaults, household sewage treatment disposal system holding tanks and privy vaults, or other applicable sewage disposal system components manufactured after September 17, 2010, and used in this state are watertight and structurally sound;

(18) Require a board of health to give notice and an opportunity for a hearing, pursuant to section 3718.11 of the Revised Code, to an affected property owner regarding any of the following:

(a) The denial of an installation, operation, or alteration permit for a sewage treatment system;

(b) The imposition of a condition on the installation of a sewage treatment system;

(c) The required replacement of a sewage treatment system;

(d) Any other final order or decision of a board of health that is made under this chapter concerning which a property owner is claiming to be aggrieved or adversely affected.

The rules also shall establish procedures for giving such notice and for conducting the hearing required in rules adopted under division (A)(18) of this section.

(19) Prescribe standards for the regulation of gray water recycling systems;

(20) Prohibit a sewage treatment system from causing a public health nuisance;

(21) Define economic impact for purposes of division (B) of this section and section 3718.022 of the Revised Code.



The director may adopt other rules under division (A) of this section that the director determines are necessary to implement this chapter and to protect the public health and welfare.

At least sixty days prior to adopting a rule under division (A) of this section, the director shall provide boards of health and any other interested parties an opportunity to comment on the rule.

(B)(1) In accordance with section 3709.20 or 3709.21 of the Revised Code, as applicable, and subject to review by and approval of the director under division (C) of section 3718.05 of the Revised Code, a board of health may adopt rules necessary for the public health providing for more stringent standards than those established in rules adopted by the director under division (A) of this section. In proposing or adopting the rules, a board of health shall consider and document the economic impact of the rules on property owners within the applicable health district.

(2) A board that intends to adopt rules shall notify the department of health of the proposed rules and submit a copy of the proposed rules and the documentation of the economic impact of the rules at least ninety days prior to the proposed date of adoption. The director shall approve or disapprove any such proposed rule within ninety days after receiving a copy of the proposed rule from the board of health.

(3) In reviewing a proposed rule, the director shall approve the rule if all of the following apply:

(a) The proposed rule is not in conflict with this chapter or rules adopted under it.

(b) The proposed rule is authorized by division (B) of this section.

(c) The proposed rule is no less stringent than rules adopted by the director.

(d) Unless otherwise authorized by this chapter or rules adopted under it, the proposed rule does not require design changes to a sewage treatment system, or component thereof, that differ from a design authorized in rules adopted under division (A) of this section, including rules adopted under division (A)(1) or (A)(3)(a)(iii) or (iv) of this section, or approved by the director under section 3718.04 of the Revised Code.



(e) The proposed rule does not require operation or maintenance procedures for a sewage treatment system that conflict with operation or maintenance procedures authorized in rules adopted under division (A) of this section, including rules adopted under division (A)(1) or (A)(3)(a)(iii) or (iv) of this section, or approved by the director under section 3718.04 of the Revised Code.

(4) If a board of health fails to submit a proposed rule to the director or fails to demonstrate that the board has considered the economic impact of the proposed rule, the rule shall have no force or effect and is not enforceable.