



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Preble County

PREBLE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

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Sewage Treatment System Program FAQ

Revised August 2018

How does the health department handle sewage treatment system complaints in Preble county?

1. A complaint must be filed in writing with the Preble County Public Health office regarding a sewage nuisance or problem.
2. A sanitarian goes to the reported site to investigate.
 - a. Complaints are confirmed or ruled as “no violation.”
 - b. For unknown issues, fluorescent dye is often used to see if it surfaces on top of the ground, within a ditch or in a creek.
3. If sewage is surfacing and/or the system is failing to operate correctly, a notice of violation (NOV) is sent to the property owner giving them 30 days to correct the problem.
4. If the property owner does nothing, a reinspection is made to verify that the issue has not been corrected.
5. If it is determined that the issue is not resolved, Board Orders are issued to the property owner giving them an additional 30 days to comply.
6. A reinspection of the property is done.
7. If further enforcement action is needed, it is brought the health department’s prosecutor (county).

Why do I need an operation permit for my sewage treatment system?

1. They are required by Ohio Administrative Code (ORC) 3701-29-19.
 - a. This is a state mandated permit, not a county requirement.
 - b. Each County in the state of Ohio is required to develop an operation and maintenance management program.
 - i. Some counties are going to approach this program differently than others.
 1. For example, some counties are going door to door to inspect every residential sewage system in the county, along with any new or altered sewage treatment systems that are given a permit by that county’s local health department.
 - a. Other situations that get an inspection/permit include:

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- i. Systems that require a lot split
- ii. Deed transfers
- iii. Realty sewage inspections
- iv. Building additions

Who does the health department inspect? How often? What is the cost?

1. Preble County Public Health does not have sufficient staff to go door to door to inspect every residential sewage system in the county.
 - a. Therefore, we have implemented operational permits on:
 - i. any new or altered sewage systems
 - ii. any sewage system that are part of a lot split,
 - iii. deed transfers,
 - iv. building additions
 - v. realty sewage inspections
 1. The rationale behind this is that our office has to go out to these properties to inspect the sewage systems anyway, so they are put into the operation and maintenance program. This in turn saves our office time and money.
 - b. Frequency of inspections and fees
 - i. **Non-mechanical**
 1. Septic Tank to gravity leach lines
 2. 10-year permit
 3. \$50
 - ii. **Mechanical device**
 1. Septic Tank to dosing tank to leach lines
 2. 5-year permit
 3. \$50
 - iii. **Mechanical device**
 1. Aeration tank to gravity leach lines
 2. 5-year permit
 3. \$50
 - iv. **Discharge system**
 1. Aeration tank and up flow filter to discharge
 2. 1 year
 3. \$35
 - v. Frequency of operational inspections and fees are very reasonable in Preble county as compared to other counties in southwest Ohio.
 1. (See Sewage Roundtable Data)

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What has Preble County Public Health done to address failing systems that continue to be a nuisance?

1. EPA Sewage Grant
 - a. Since 2012, PCPH has applied for and been awarded approximately \$300,000 to assist residential sewage system owners in handling the cost of fixing their sewage treatment systems.
 - b. Sewage grant money has been available throughout the entire county and need for assistance is based on the eligibility requirements.
 - c. If an individual qualifies, they are eligible to receive 50%, 85% or 100% of funds toward addressing their system, which is dependent on their income.

When Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) is involved

1. Sewage treatment systems that produce over 1000 gallons of waste per day are in OEPA's jurisdiction.
 - a. Examples:
 - i. Restaurants
 - ii. Mobile home parks
 - iii. Factories
2. Sewage systems that produce less than 1000 gallons per day are in Preble county's jurisdiction. Preble County Public Health (PCPH) and OEPA have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in place that states PCPH will be responsible for sewage systems that produce less than 1000 gallons per day.
3. Enforcement of OEPA permits.
 - a. If our office receives a complaint regarding a sewage treatment system that produces over 1000 gallons of waste per day, we go out to verify whether or not there is a problem. If there is a problem, we will take pictures and forward a report to OEPA for enforcement.

What is the health department doing about Glenwood?

1. Sewage grant money has been used to try and correct residential sewage systems in this area. The biggest problem in this area is the size of lots (generally $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ acre) and maintaining proper distances from wells and sewage systems. In some cases, only 100'

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of leach line has been installed due to the lot size and distance from the well.

2. OEPA has done some water clarity testing in the stream located east of Glenwood. Test results were high in e. coli bacteria. Re-testing was done in different areas of Glenwood by a private firm hired by the Preble County Commissioners. The test results were similar to the EPA findings. OEPA issued findings and orders to the Preble County Commissioners to install a public sewage system for the Glenwood area.

If you should have any other questions regarding sewage treatment systems or other environmental health concerns, please contact our Environmental Health Division at 937-472-0087 or email us at admin@preblecountyhealth.org.

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