



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION
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SEPTIC TANK DESTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Background

Abandoned and improperly destroyed septic tanks pose health and safety hazards. People and animals may fall into abandoned or improperly destroyed septic tanks, with injuries and even drowning. The required perforation of the tank bottom, or complete removal of the tank, ensures that water will not accumulate and lead to drowning. Proper compaction of backfill prevent settling.

Purpose

Contra Costa County Health Officer Regulations require that abandoned septic tanks be properly destroyed in order to minimize related health and safety hazards. A septic tank on property served by sewer must be properly destroyed within 30 days of connecting to a sewer system.

Chronological Summary of Process

1. Submit an application and fee for septic tank destruction to Contra Costa County Environmental Health.
Include a plot plan showing the septic tank location in relation to the property lines and structures.
Work can commence after the permit is approved and issued.
2. Have the septic tank contents removed and properly disposed of by a licensed septic tank pumper.
Present the receipt for pumping during the Environmental Health inspection.

3. If the tank is to be removed and disposed off site, have the inspection done before the excavation has been backfilled.
4. If the tank will be destroyed in place: (1) remove the top; (2) break down the baffle; (3) disconnect and remove the inlet and outlet piping and sanitary tees; and, (4) evenly perforate the surface of the tank bottom in at least six places. Perforations can be holes (minimum 1” diameter) drilled or boards removed from the bottom of a redwood tank.
5. Submit a request for inspection in writing a minimum of 48 hours in advance via fax (925) 692-2504, email (ehlu@hsd.cccounty.us) or mail to the address listed above. Request for inspection must include site address, contact name and number and date of inspection and the purpose of inspection, i.e. septic tank destruction. The district inspector will respond to confirm the appointment date and time.
6. After a satisfactory inspection, backfill the tank excavation with either clean fill dirt, sand or concrete.
Note: if tank is located within 10 feet of a present or future structure or building addition, contact the local Building Inspection Department for compaction requirements. (If fill dirt is used, it must be well tamped to minimize settling).
7. Copies of the final approval will be provided for the property owner.