

**HP-HE-100 – HOLDING TANK PERMIT  
ISSUANCE POLICY****1.0 PURPOSE**

The Sewerage System Regulation stipulates that the Health Authority is responsible for issuing holding tank permits. However, holding tanks are not a desirable option for disposing of wastewater, since the cost involved to pump and haul may lead to wastewater being disposed of in unacceptable ways. This policy is written to ensure consistent application of Part 2 of the Sewerage System Regulation, and the issuance of holding tank permits. Each application will be evaluated upon its own merits and with guidance from this policy.

**2.0 POLICY**

- 2.1 Holding tank permits shall only be considered for existing lots in the following circumstances:
- a) Where a holding tank is necessary to correct a malfunction that cannot be corrected by connection to sanitary sewer or by any onsite disposal method.
  - b) Where the applicant provides a letter of commitment from the local authority that sanitary sewer will be installed and operational within 12 months.
  - c) Where the tank accommodates construction sites, silviculture camps or forestry camps for less than 12 months and onsite disposal is not practical.
  - d) Where the tank is to receive sani-station sewage at properties that are not connected to municipal sanitary sewers.
  - e) To address unique circumstances. Deviations from Policy must be supported by a Supervisor. Rationale for Permit approval must be documented and attached with the IHA copy of the Permit. In reviewing unique circumstances, consideration should be given (but not limited) to: private vs. public ownership, year-round access for pumping, cost of pumping, socio-economic considerations, population affected if the tank overflows, establishing a precedent that may result in a rush of development applications using holding tanks.
- 2.2 Holding tank permits will be issued when a local government wishes to allow new construction using holding tanks **only if** the local government is willing to pass a local by-law governing their use. The local bylaw must include: i) right of access for pumping ii) details on how the local government will recover costs when the owner is in default iii) Waste Management approved disposal sites and iv) registration of a restrictive covenant that runs with the land stipulating that operation and maintenance of the holding tank be carried out in a manner to prevent a health hazard.
- 2.3 Holding tank permits shall not be considered in the following circumstances:
1. To accommodate new or expanded development with a Daily Design Flow that will or does exceed the parcel's ability to contain or treat domestic sewage.
  2. For new construction (except as in 2.1 or 2.2 above).

### 3.0 PROCEDURES

3.1 An Application to Construct a Holding Tank (form HPL 0560) must be completed. It must be submitted along with:

1. \$400.00 fee.
2. When appropriate, a report from a Professional Engineer who is an Authorized Person under the Sewerage System Regulation which demonstrates it is not possible to install a Type 1, 2, or 3 sewerage disposal systems.
3. The plans and specifications as required in section 6 of the application.
4. A proposed maintenance plan which includes the name of the pumping company, the volume to be hauled per service, and the disposal location.

#### 3.2 Construction Details

- a) Tanks and equipment must be designed for their intended use and installed and maintained in accordance to the manufacturer's guidelines.
- b) Tank(s) must be at least 15 meters from wells or a surface body of water, 3 meters from roadways and property boundaries, and accessible throughout the year for servicing.
- c) Lids and risers shall be provided to grade or above for pumping access. All lids shall be secure, durable (rot-resistant), odour-proof, and childproof, including able to be jumped upon.
- d) Tank sizing should be according to the local bylaw or: designed for at least 7 days capacity and based upon daily estimated sewage flows from the current version of the Sewerage System Standard Practice Manual produced by BC Ministry of Health Services. Consideration should be given to: how quickly the tank can be serviced in an emergency, number of trucks available, capacity of trucks, and whether the Ministry of Environment disposal site is open 7 days a week.
- e) Alarms shall be provided according to local bylaw or: with a visual alarm at 75% of tank capacity, and an audible alarm at 90% capacity. Each alarm shall have its own float switch or sensor and its own electrical breaker. Alarms shall be located both inside and outside the building with the outside alarm in a visible location.
- f) Electrical components should be installed by a qualified electrician.
- g) The tank(s) and riser(s) shall be leak tested using the procedures found in Appendix H of the Ministry of Health Services' Sewerage System Standard Practice Manual.
- h) Where there is a high water table, tanks must be anchored according to the manufacturer specifications.
- i) In waterfront applications, special permit conditions may be necessary to provide extra protection to surface water (e.g. built in quick connect coupling for pumper trucks).
- j) An Environmental Health Officer may require the design be by a professional engineer where site conditions warrant (e.g. high water table, soil stability, etc.).

3.3 In considering an application, an Environmental Health Officer:

- a) May inspect the site and require any observation holes or other information necessary to be satisfied that this policy is being adhered to.
- b) May issue or reject the application for a Permit. If issued, any conditions they deem necessary may form part of the Permit, including the requirement for a final inspection.
- c) The Environmental Health Officer must authorize backfill and use prior to the backfilling or use of the holding tank.

### 4.0 REFERENCES

Sewerage System Regulation 209/2010

[http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/22\\_326\\_2004](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/22_326_2004)

Ministry of Health Services – Sewerage System Standard Practice Manual

[http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/protect/lup\\_standards.html](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/protect/lup_standards.html)