

Sewage Rules to Change

There will be changes to the household sewage treatment system regulations over the next several years that are important for Darke County property owners. Currently, local health department regulations determine the type of septic systems that may be installed in Darke County. Soil testing is required and will continue to be required to determine the type of septic system (i.e. leachfield, mound, etc) that can be installed on a property. After January 1, 2012, statewide sewage regulations will become effective, eliminating the currently established local regulations for household sewage treatment systems. The Statewide regulations will be more restrictive than the current local rules and will make it more difficult to meet the requirements needed to install a traditional leachfield in Darke County.

There are several dates that are important for Darke County property owners to know due to these changes.

Applications for New Sewage Treatment Systems (Malfunctioning Systems, Building Lots, Land Splits, etc.)

- If application is approved after September 17, 2010 and **prior** to January 1, 2012; the application is valid under *local rules* for 3 years. This means once the application is approved, the applicant has three years to purchase permits. No extensions are granted for applications.
- If the application is approved **on or after** January 1, 2012; the application must meet the requirements of the new *statewide* rules.

New Sewage Installation Permits

- If permit is issued between now and December 31, 2011, the permit is good under *current local rules* until December 31, 2012. This permit may also be eligible for one 6 month extension.
- If permit is issued after January 1, 2012 and the application for the permit was approved **prior** to January 1, 2012; the permit is good under *current local rules* for one year. This permit may also be eligible for one 6 month extension.
- If permit is issued after January 1, 2012 and the application for the permit was approved **on or after** January 1, 2012; permit is valid under *statewide rules* for one year.

Please note, a homeowner may have the Health Department evaluate a soil report for a property without filling out an application or committing to install a septic system. Also keep in mind; it may take several months to go through the plan approval process; particularly if the site involves a land split. If you wish to install a septic system under the current local regulations, you should submit your application well in advance of the rule change. A list of Certified Soil Scientists is available at the Health Department, 300 Garst Avenue, Greenville. More information on the rule change can be found by visiting the Ohio Department of Health Website www.odh.ohio.gov or by contacting the Darke County Health Department at (937) 548-4196 ext. 209. Information on septic systems for existing homes may be found at the Health Department, and applications for building site approval are available at www.darkecountyhealth.org.