

## Septic Tank Septage Removal and Disposal Examination Study Guide

The purpose of this study guide is to assist septage removal and disposal contractors in preparing for the certification examination which is administered by the Georgia Department of Public Health. A certified contractor must demonstrate knowledge of the Department's Onsite Sewage Manual.

This applies to contractors who will dispose of the septage they pump in a properly permitted sewage treatment facility. Properly permitted facilities are public or community sewage treatments systems permitted by the Environmental Protection Division for treatment in a plant, treatment at separate septage handling facilities, or direct land application. However, if a contractor wishes to dispose of septage via land application, he/she must contact Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Environmental Protection Division. They are responsible of all activities involving the land application of septage received from individual and multiple septage haulers. Pumping and disposal shall be in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Department's Manual for On-Site Sewage Management Systems.

Persons engaged in pumping and hauling septage must successfully complete the requirements of state certification **and** must receive Septage Removal and Disposal Permits from the county health department(s) where the business is based. The state certification must be renewed every two years (if certification or renewal occurs during an even year) and renewal will be based on completion of six (6) hours continuing education credit and the payment of a renewal fee. A septage removal permit will be issued by the county health department(s) where your business is based and will be subject to the terms of the individual county. Permit applications must be submitted at least ten (10) days prior to engaging in removal activities and shall include: the applicant's name and address and the business name and address, the manner by which septage is removed, transported and given final disposal, and evidence that the septage removed and transported will be accepted at an approved disposal site. Septage removal permits are valid for a period of twelve (12) months. When applying for a septage removal permit, the means by which the contractor will dispose of pumped waste will be of primary importance. The contractor must produce evidence that documents that wastes will be disposed of in an approved manner. Permit renewal requires a pump truck inspection; a manifest review; a letter of acceptance from a sewage disposal facility permitted by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division; and payment of all applicable county fees.

Septage disposal can be accomplished at a county, municipal or otherwise approved wastewater treatment plant; a separate septage handling facility, or at a land application site specifically permitted by the Environmental Protection Division for handling septage.

Vehicles used to transport pumped septage must be inspected by the health department and must be water tight and properly maintained. The vehicle body and all pumps, hoses valves and fittings must be designed and maintained in a manner that will prevent leakage or spillage. Vehicles must be identified with letters and numerals on both sides of the vehicle that are at least

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two (2) inches in height, which identify the name of the person or firm and the permit number.

Septic tanks shall be accessed for pumping by excavating a sufficient amount of soil to remove the entire lid or both access port covers. Breaking a hole into the top or sides of the tank to access the contents is not acceptable. Pumping shall be accomplished by completely removing all liquid wastes, sludge and scum from both side of a two compartment septic tank. The condition of the tank should be noted at the time of pumping. Written documentation should be furnished to the tank owner noting the condition of the septic tank and a copy of such notice should be sent to the health department. Once the pumping operation is completed, excavated soil shall be replaced and the ground surface returned to its original contour. Individuals permitted for septage removal and disposal shall maintain a manifest identifying the date and location of systems serviced and the date and location of final disposal.

Care should be taken at all times when there is open access to septic tank contents. Bacteria in septage can spread disease to people through the fecal oral route and can also contaminate water supplies if spillage near wells or springs occurs.