

# Septage Removal and Disposal Exam Study Guide



*A passing score of 70% will be required for Septic Tank Pumper Certification*

*A passing score of 80% will be required for Level I Inspector Certification*

In preparation for the exam, it is recommended that individuals refer to the study guides on the Department's website at [www.dph.ga.gov](http://www.dph.ga.gov) and review the Rules of the Department of Public Health, 511-3-1, as well as the Georgia Manual for Onsite Sewage Management Systems.

Please contact the State Office at 404.657.6534 to make an appointment to sit for the exam.

This study guide is not intended to be a comprehensive resource for residential on-site sewage system installations. Please refer to the Manual for On-site Sewage Management Systems for more detailed information.

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

This study guide is for contractors who will dispose of the septage they pump in a properly permitted sewage treatment facility. Properly permitted facilities are public or community sewage treatment 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 be issued a "Septage Removal and Disposal Permit" 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 as well as a business plan. The business plan should include the method of pumping, storage, transport, and disposal. Septage removal permits are valid for a period not to exceed twelve (12) months and expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of each calendar year. 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 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 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 t's and tank should be noted at the time of pumping. Repairs may require permitting by the county health department. 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.

Temporary Storage of Septage - The Department recognizes there may be instances when domestic septage must be temporarily stored until final disposal in the event disposal of septage is delayed by inclement weather; or a local Department of Georgia Environmental Protection approved treatment facility is briefly inaccessible. The County Board of Health may allow under the authority of the septage removal permit a certified septage or portable sanitation pumper to provide for temporary septage storage at their company's base of operation by meeting the following criteria:

- ✓ Successful application and approval for on-site storage as reviewed by the local environmental health authority.
- ✓ Installation of below ground tanks must meet the standards and installation requirements of Department for septic tanks and should be a state approved concrete, plastic or fiberglass tank.
- ✓ Above ground tanks should be placed on a curbed impervious pad made from materials to support the weight load and facilitate clean up in the case of a spill.
- ✓ Tanks should be designed for the stress of the holding capacity.
- ✓ Storage tank volume should be proportional to the scale of business of the pumping company. The maximum projected capacity must be no more than two to three days of typical pumping as demonstrated by manifesting.
- ✓ Temporary storage capacity must be for a single company use only, no multiple haulers comingling or "offloading" from other companies will be allowed. Manifesting must document transfer for truck to tank, etc. to disposal or handling facility.
- ✓ All local and state regulations and laws must be met, inclusive of approved zoning, business licensing, and county environmental health Removal and Disposal permitting and necessary inspection.