

Land Application of Organic Waste - Domestic Septage

Fact Sheet

According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), land application of organic waste materials such as septage, sewage sludge, non-sewage sludge, food processing, and other solid waste provides valuable nutrients to help organically enrich soils and restore the opportunity for improved plant growth. The beneficial use of these materials not only serves to provide an effective soil amendment, but also helps divert thousands of tons of waste from landfills and incinerators, saving cost of disposal, while preserving valuable landfill space and eliminating the potential for harmful emissions to the air we breathe.¹

What is Domestic Septage?

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), domestic septage is the liquid or solid materials removed from a septic tank, cesspool, portable toilet, Type III marine sanitation device, or a similar system that receives only domestic sewage (water and wastewater from humans or household operations that is discharged to or otherwise enters a treatment works). Generally includes wastes derived from the toilet, bath or shower, sink, garbage disposal, dishwasher, and washing machine. Domestic septage may include household septage as well as septage from establishments such as schools, restaurants, and motels, as long as this septage does not contain other types of wastes than those listed above.²

What Types of Land is it Applied To?

Domestic Septage can be applied to land located in both populated and unpopulated areas.³

What are the Regulations?

The NYSDEC is the lead agency in New York State that regulates and issues permits for the transfer, storage and land application of septage. Title 6 Part 360-4 in the NYCRR (New York Code, Rules and Regulations) covers the general operational requirements for land application and associated storage facilities. The regulations are designed to protect against potential environmental and human health risks and against nuisances.³

Permit conditions are developed in regards to soil characteristics, horizontal setbacks, slope of the land, vertical separation to bedrock and ground water. The submittal of a map, site plan or aerial photo is required and is reviewed prior to issuance of a permit. Records are to be kept regarding septic application amounts.³

According to the DEC website, the organization is revising these regulations to reflect the Department's experience in implementing these regulations since the last major revision in 1992. The current Part 360 Regulations will remain in effect until such time as the rulemaking process is complete.¹

For more information about land application of septage, please contact the NYSDEC Office in Avon, NY at (585)226-6706 and visit the NYSDEC website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/96335.html> to review Waste Management, Composting & Recycling Permits.



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1. New York state Department of Environmental Conservation, DEC. (2015, September 15). *Land Application of Organic Waste*. Retrieved from <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8797.html>
2. United States Environmental Protection Agency. 1995. *Process Design Manual Land Application of Sewage Sludge and Domestic Septage*. Retrieved from <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8797.html>
3. Thomson Reuters. 2015. *NY Department of State – Division of Administrative Rules Subpart 160-4 Land Application and Associated Storage Facilities*. Retrieved from [https://govt.westlaw.com/nycrr/Browse/Home/NewYork/NewYorkCodesRulesandRegulations?guid=icc3a71c0b5a011dda0a4e17826ebc834&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=Default&contextData=\(sc.Default\)](https://govt.westlaw.com/nycrr/Browse/Home/NewYork/NewYorkCodesRulesandRegulations?guid=icc3a71c0b5a011dda0a4e17826ebc834&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=Default&contextData=(sc.Default))