



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES
BUREAU FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Joe Manchin III
Governor

Patsy A. Hardy, FACHE, MSN, MBA
Cabinet Secretary

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Sanitarians in West Virginia
All Certified Septic System Installers in West Virginia
All Septic Tank Manufacturers and Distributors in West Virginia
All Septic Tank Pumpers and Cleaners in West Virginia

FROM: Rick Hertges, Program Manager
Onsite Sewage Program, PHSD

DATE: September 22, 2008

RE: **Installation of Effluent Filters in Septic Tank Outlets**

PURPOSE: To protect septic system drainfields from premature clogging and failure due to the escape from the septic tank of non-settleable solids and/or unauthorized flushed materials.

The West Virginia Sewage Advisory Board has recommended installation of septic tank effluent filters as an inexpensive method to enhance the longevity of septic tank system drainfields. Effluent filters may also protect unwary homeowners from inadvertently causing extensive (and expensive) damage to their drainfields due to abuse.

The Public Health Sanitation Division therefore makes a strong recommendation that septic tank systems installed or modified after this date be fitted with a septic tank effluent filter. When an effluent filter is installed, there must also be a riser installed to the surface of the ground at the outlet end of the septic tank. The riser lid must be effectively secured at all times.

Effluent filters selected should be commercially manufactured units designed expressly for installation into the outlet "Tee" or outlet baffle of septic tanks for the purpose of preventing excess solids from exiting the tank. Filters must be rated for the design flow of the household or establishment served. It is recommended to use filters which have been certified under NSF Standard 46. Unless premature clogging of the filter is detected by the user, filters should not be cleaned except when the septic tank is emptied of solids by a licensed septic tank cleaner. Installers should educate users on the signs of slow drainage indicating progressive filter clogging; as well as re-emphasizing items which are not to be disposed of in a septic system.