Operation & Maintenance Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Operation & Maintenance (O&M) and why do I need an Operation Permit? The O&M Program is a **state-wide** initiative to ensure proper maintenance of Home Sewage Treatment Systems (HSTSs) to protect public health, minimize pollution of Ohio waters, and extend the lifetime of private sewage systems. Operation permits are required for all private sewage treatment systems by the Ohio Administrative Code Chapter 3701-29. Permits additionally provide homeowners with education on system maintenance.

2. What are the requirements for my Home Sewage Treatment System (HSTS)? The maintenance & documentation requirements for your HSTS can be found in your Operation Permit and are determined by system design. Compliance with permit conditions is judged based on submission of service contracts, service reports, and/or pump reports by Scioto County/State -registered service providers and pumpers.

3. How do I find out what type of HSTS I have and what fees will be assessed to me? A copy of your HSTS records can be requested by calling (740)355-8358. Your fee will be based on system design. Fees are paid upon enrollment, and renewal, of operation permits.

4. Will I have to update my old HSTS if it no longer meets current installation code requirements? No. Systems will not be "failed" based solely on age, but instead evaluated on performance. Ohio law allows HSTSs in operation prior to 2015 to be deemed approved if they are not causing a public health nuisance.

5. Will I have to replace my HSTS if it is found to be creating a public health nuisance? Not necessarily. If the nuisance situation can be eliminated by approved repairs, then the system will be deemed compliant. If repairs are not possible, SCHD will review replacement options with homeowners.

6. How can I pay for the Operation Permit? SCHD accepts cash and checks – the department is **not** set up currently to accept debit/credit. Payment can be mailed with the invoice or dropped off in person at our office per the instructions provided in the O&M letter.

7. How will I be notified of my permit fee & requirements? What happens if I do not pay the fee? SCHD will provide notice by regular mail at least one month prior to the permit fee payment due date. Failure to comply with renewal will result in a Non-Compliance Inspection. The cost of the Non-Compliance Inspection ($250.00), any sampling, renewal ($50), and applicable 25% late fees will be at the expense of the owner. Any unpaid fees shall be placed as a lien on the real property.

8. What is SCHD planning to do with the monies collected through Operation Permit fees? The money generated from the O&M program will pay for the materials used for mailings, postage for mailings, and personnel costs for administering the program. Personnel costs include preparing mailings, maintaining the database, reviewing service reports, following up on non-compliance & system performance issues, providing homeowner education, and conducting quality control of registered service providers.

9. Who can perform the required maintenance on my HSTS? Any registered service provider certified to service your type of HSTS can perform the required maintenance. A list of providers with the system types they service can be found at:

10. Do I have to use a registered service provider? Some HSTSs require that a registered service provider perform the required maintenance while other systems may only require proof of pumping from a registered septage hauler.

11. Who submits the proof of required maintenance? How soon must reports be submitted? A registered service provider or septage hauler can submit proof of service within 60 days of service. You can also submit scanned/photographed documents through our web portal. See O&M letter for instructions.

12. Is there any help for homeowners who cannot afford to replace their HSTS? SCHD is always in search of grants for low-income families to replace their HSTSs. For 2024, SCHD has been awarded $75,000.00 in funding from Ohio EPA Water Pollution Control Loan Fund to assist low-income-eligible homeowners with the repair/replacement of failing septic systems.

13. Do Operation permits transfer ownership upon sale of a home? Yes. Once a system is enrolled into the program, the Operation Permit issued will remain associated with the system and will transfer automatically to the new owner upon sale. Sellers are responsible for disclosing details of the operation permit terms & conditions to buyers. Please inform SCHD of property transfers so that owner contact and billing information can be updated. NPDES systems are required to file a HSTS Transfer Form with EPA. Click this link HSTS Transfer Form Ohio EPA

14. I have questions about my Home Sewage Treatment System (HSTS). Who should I call? Call Scioto County Health Department - Environmental Division at (740) 355-8358.