

Procedures for Septic Tank Pumping
Guthrie County Environmental Health Department
Lake Panorama On-site Wastewater Management District
South Panorama Sanitary District

January, 2009

In order to have a consistent procedure for pumping tanks with all companies and to have the tanks cleaned to the standards this Dept. would like, the following procedure should be followed by any company cleaning septic tanks, holding tanks, and similar structures in Guthrie County (and associated Counties of Adair, Cass, and Audubon).

Guthrie County will provide a list of companies that have been operating within the area. It is the responsibility of any company wishing to be on this list to request inclusion as it is impossible for this Dept. to know all companies who would operate in this area. This list will be continually updated to the best of this Dept.'s ability as companies ask to be on the list or drop out of the business.

It is the responsibility of the owner of the property to contact the company and all dealings will be a private matter between the company and the person hiring the company. Frequently, banks, real estate agents, etc. may be involved. This Dept. will assist all parties but it is ultimately the company and owner/agent who are responsible.

Any company pumping tanks must be properly licensed through the Dept. of Natural Resources and must provide this Dept. with its State License number.

Companies should follow these procedures when cleaning a tank:

This Dept. should be consulted if there are any questions regarding proper pumping of a particular tank. Failure to do so may result in work that will not be approved by this Dept.

Besides the septic tank, any associated pump pit must be pumped as well.

Septic tanks, holding tanks, and similar structures must be pumped, the material blown back, and pumped again to assure thorough cleaning of the tank. This procedure may need to be repeated several times.

Tanks with heavy build ups of sludge or scum may need to have the material physically broken up with rakes, shovels, etc. In some cases, hand removal of some material may be needed. In some cases, the access opening may be too small to properly pump a tank and then another access must be opened or in extreme cases, another access made into the tank.

To minimize the amount of solids in the pump chambers, these should be pumped prior to pumping the tank.

Care should be taken to not damage internal structures and parts within any tank. Baffles, tees, pumps, alarms, wiring, and other structures must not be damaged or broken in pumping tanks. Should this be done the damage must either be properly repaired by the company or the problem reported to the owner or this Dept.

Upon completion of the work, this Dept. must be notified if it is a project that this Dept. is involved in for any reason or is within the Lake Panorama On-Site Wastewater Mgmt. District, South Panorama Sanitary District, or cities of Jamaica, Bagley, and Yale.

Any company doing this work needs to be sure that all equipment is kept on the property where any tanks are located unless permission has been received to enter another adjacent property.

This Dept. is available to provide information on all systems that the Dept. has permits and drawings on. Older non-complying systems may not have any information available with this Dept.

Should a company clean a tank and determine that the tank is deteriorated beyond reasonable use or there are other major problems with the system, the company should report this information to this Dept.

Failure to comply with the terms of this procedure may result in the company's name being removed from the Dept.'s list of companies. It would not preclude the company from working in rural County areas but could result in a non-recommendation if prospective owners/agents contacted this Dept. Work could NOT be done within Panorama, Yale, Jamaica, or Bagley management districts.

This Dept. is available to help all companies pumping tanks in any reasonable way possible.

This policy approved by the Guthrie County Board of Health at the February 20, 2008 meeting.