

Sand Filter and Pressure Distribution Maintenance

Septic system owners are responsible for the maintenance of their septic system.

Required Inspections:

Owners of sand filter systems and/ or pressure distribution systems permitted before Jan. 2, 2014 must inspect their septic tank and dosing tank at least once a year for sludge and scum accumulation. The septic tank(s) must be pumped:

- when surface floating scum accumulations within the tank is less than three inches from the bottom of the outlet tee, holes, or ports and,
- when sludge from the bottom of the tank is less than six inches below the bottom of the outlet tee, holes or ports.

Owners of sand filter systems and/ or pressure distribution systems permitted on or after Jan. 2, 2014 must maintain a service contract with a certified Maintenance Provider. A copy of the service contract must be submitted to DEQ before the system is installed.

Owners of sand filter systems and/ or pressure distribution systems permitted on or after Jan. 2, 2014 must submit the annual report, pursuant to Oregon Administrative Rule 340-071-0130(17), and annual evaluation fee, pursuant to OAR 340-071-0140(3).

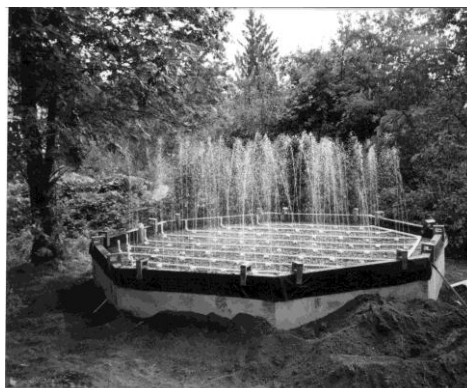
Maintenance:

- DEQ recommends pumping the septic tank when the solids accumulation is 35 percent of the tank volume. Pumping the dosing tank, or pump chamber of a two-compartment tank, at the same time is also recommended.
- Test the pump and alarm operation at least once each year by manually lifting each float switch inside of the dosing tank of pump chamber.
- Test pump-cycle volume by measuring the sewage level in the tank at the start of pumping and again at the pump turn-off.
 - The proper pump cycle volume for a residential sand filter is no more than ten percent of the projected daily

sewage flow (e.g. a maximum of 45 gallons per cycle for a dwelling with a maximum of 4 bedrooms). A rule of thumb is about four inches in a concrete two-compartment septic tank, or two inches in a single compartment dosing septic tank.

- Pressure distribution drainfields can receive no more than 20 percent of the projected daily sewage flow (e.g. a maximum of 90 gallons per pump cycle for a dwelling with a maximum of 4 bedrooms). A rule of thumb is about eight inches in a concrete two-compartment septic tank, or four inches in a single compartment dosing septic tank.

- Inspect the screen around the pump at least once each year and clean as necessary. The screen needs to be cleaned when it is about 50 percent clogged. Wash the pump screen over the septic tank manhole.
- Flush sand filter and pressure distribution drainfield pipes. Sand filter and pressure distribution systems constructed after 1995 should have cleaning valves at the ground surface. Flush the lateral pressure distribution pipes within the sand filter and pressure distribution system at least once a year. Flush each lateral pipe separately and be mindful of the liquid level in the tank (do not run the pump dry).



Sand filter squirt test during system construction.



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

Regional Field Offices

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Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

Cars require air and oil filter inspections, cleaning and replacement to keep performing, and these systems do too! These systems are expensive to construct and need care to last as long as possible.

For more information about the Onsite Program, please visit

www.deq.state.or.us/wq/onsite/onsite.htm

For a list of certified Maintenance Providers,

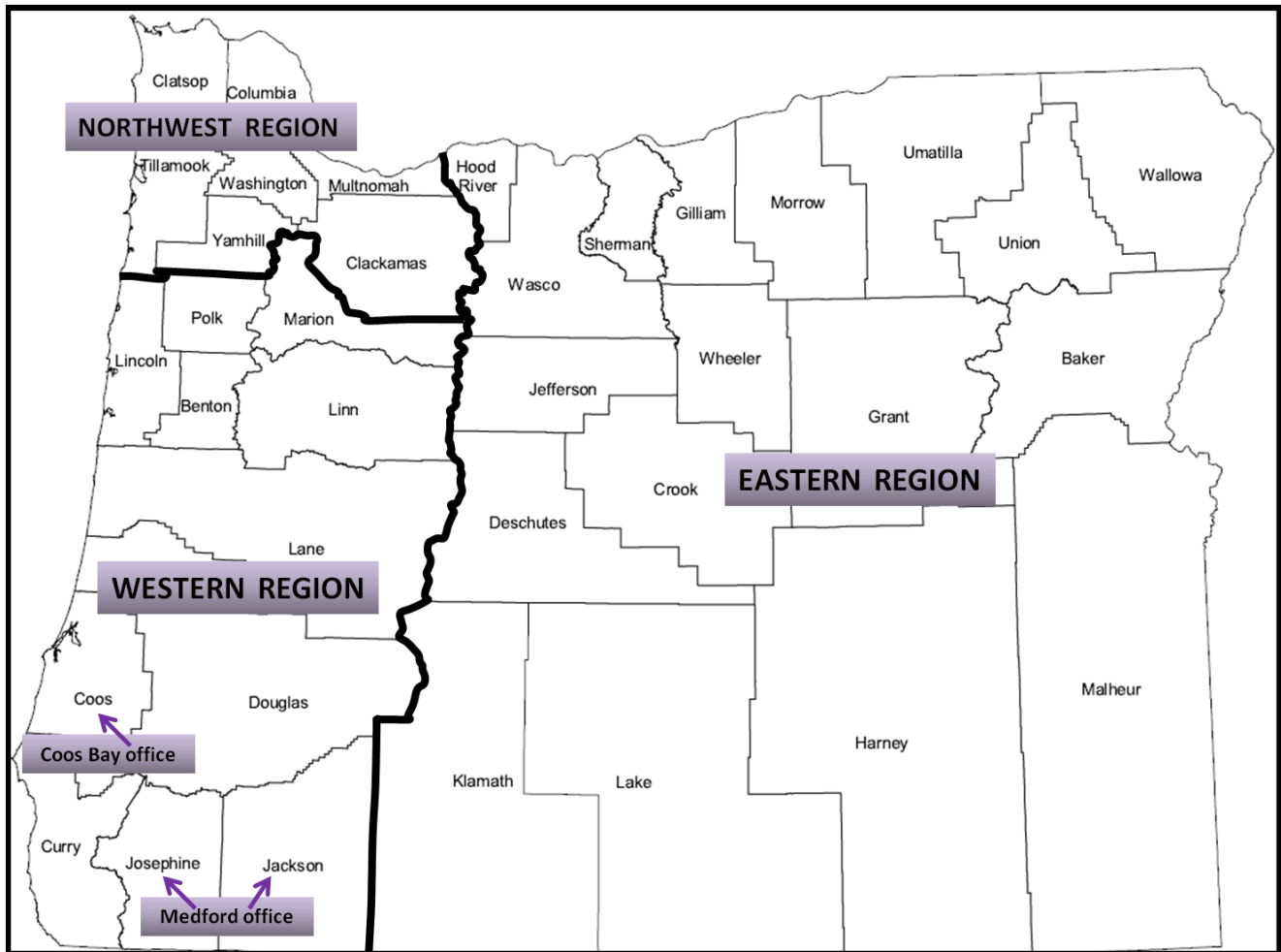
www.deq.state.or.us/wq/onsite/certification

Alternative Formats

Alternative formats of this document can be made available. Contact DEQ's Office of Communications & Outreach for more information at (503) 229-5696.

Hearing impaired dial 711.

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality Regions



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