

# Mendocino County Division of Environmental Health

## Policy # 4211.03

### **EXPIRATIONS FOR SITE EVALUATION REPORTS**

#### **Intent and Benefit**

This policy is intended to allow Site Evaluators to re-evaluate reports greater than 5 years old. One benefit would be to provide an opportunity to improve the sewage system design to include any technological advances that were previously unavailable. A second benefit would be to provide site evaluators the opportunity to reevaluate their original proposed design for any flaws or revise the original design to include current construction standard details.

#### **Background Information**

DEH currently does not have an expiration date for approved site evaluation reports. Currently, when an application, based on a previously approved site evaluation report, is made for a sewage system permit, DEH staff may add some additional design details (inspection risers and effluent filters) or change the wastewater distribution of the system to meet current standards prior to issuing the permit. DEH might also request the applicant to have the designer revise the report to the current construction standards.

#### **Statement of Problem**

Under the current practice there is no policy to encourage current available technology be used in place of older more cumbersome or less efficient designs. There have been cases in which the originally proposed sewage system site (or replacement area) was altered (mistakenly or purposely) rendering it unusable for a sewage system and requiring a new review of the project site. There have been cases in which the Site Evaluator, due to increased level of industry expertise, advances in technology, and/or due to changes in standard industry practice, chooses to revise their report. Unfortunately, no formal policy existed to refer older site evaluation reports back to the designer for review.

#### **Policy Implementation**

Prior to issuance of the sewage permit, all previously approved<sup>1</sup> site evaluation reports older than 5 years shall be referred back for a letter of acknowledgement from the qualified Site Evaluator. The evaluator should determine that the design is still the most appropriate for the site given the soil conditions at the site and any changes which may have occurred. The site evaluator may opt to upgrade the overall sewage system design at their discretion. The site evaluator should conduct a site visit to confirm that site conditions have not changed significantly and that the soil description was accurately reported.

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<sup>1</sup> "Approved" means a letter, completed soils form that indicates soils work approved, a pre-2001 sewage permit that is completely filled out without a signature or initials at the location of the signature box.

In some cases, conditions may make it necessary to request a completely new Site Evaluation Report. At no time shall a permit be issued for a design that does not demonstrate the required 24 inches of useable soils. Designs in less than 24 inches of soil are only permissible as worst-case scenario repairs for existing systems in use supporting existing occupied structures.

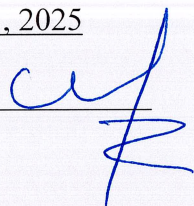
When the revised site evaluation report includes substantial changes of the sewage system design or additional soil tests that must be reviewed by DEH a review fee shall be charged. No fee shall be charged for revisions in which only updated construction standards have been added/changed.

Once the letter of acknowledgment or revised Site Evaluation Report is received and approved, DEH will process the permit application.

**Effective Date:** August 8, 2002

**Revised Date:** May 1, 2025

**Director's Initials:** \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a cursive 'C' followed by a stylized 'R' with a horizontal stroke through it.