

Chapter 48. Rules of Travis County, Texas for On-Site Sewage Facilities¹

Contents

Subchapter A

48.001	Policy and Purpose	2
48.002	Definitions and Acronyms	2
48.003	Conflicts	4
48.004	On-Site Sewage Facility Regulation and Enforcement	4
48.005	Jurisdictional Area/Applicability	4
48.006	Compliance with On-Site Sewage Facility Rules	5
48.007	TCEQ Rules Adopted; Incorporation by Reference	5
48.008	Authority to Act	6
48.009	Adoption of Rules that are More Stringent	6
48.010	Additional Findings	6
48.011	Local Administrative Procedures	6
48.012	Duties and Powers of Designated Representatives	6
48.013	Collection of Fees	7
48.014	Appeals	7
47.015	Enforcement Plan	7
48.016	Severability	8
48.017	Relinquishment of Order	8
48.018	Effective Date	8
48.019-48.030	Reserved for Expansion	8

Subchapter B

48.031	Travis County's More Stringent Rules	9
48.032	Facility Planning [285.4]	9
48.033	Application and Permitting Procedures (§§285.3, 285.5 and 285.6)	10
48.034	Maintenance Requirements (§285.7)	13
48.035	Site Evaluation (§285.30)	14
48.036	Criteria for Sewage Treatment Systems (§285.32)	14
48.037	Criteria for Sewage Disposal Systems (§285.33)	14
48.038-48.050	Reserved for Expansion)	16

Subchapter C.

48.051	Local Administrative Procedures	16
48.052	Enforcement	16
48.053	Notice	17
48.054	Permit to Construct and License to Operate.	17
48.055	Variance Procedures	18
48.056	Submission of Planning Materials	20
48.057	Procedures for Reviewing Planning Materials	21
48.058	Permit to Construct	21
48.059	License to Operate	23
48.060	Affidavit Forms	23
48.061	Recording of Designated Representative's License Number	24

¹ Chapter 48 was replaced by Travis County Commissioners Court on December 30, 2014, Item 21R. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality approved the rules on February 23, 2015.

Subchapter A

48.001 Policy and Purpose

(a) Background and Policy

- (1) The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has established rules for on-site sewage facilities to provide the citizens of this State with adequate public health protection and to minimize environmental pollution.
- (2) The Legislature has enacted legislation, codified as Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 366, which authorizes a local governmental entity to regulate the use of on-site sewage facilities in its jurisdiction in order to abate or prevent pollution or injury to public health arising out of the use of on-site sewage facilities.
- (3) Due notice was given of a public meeting to determine whether the Commissioners Court of Travis County, Texas should enact an order controlling or prohibiting the installation or use of on-site sewage facilities in Travis County, Texas.
- (4) The Commissioners Court of Travis County, Texas finds that the use of on-site sewage facilities in Travis County, Texas is causing or may cause pollution, and is injuring or may injure the public health.
- (5) The Commissioners Court of Travis County, Texas has considered the matter and deems it appropriate to enact an order adopting rules regulating on-site sewage facilities to abate or prevent pollution or injury to public health in Travis County, Texas.

(b) Findings and Adoption of Rules. The Commissioners Court of Travis County, Texas finds that:

- (1) The matters and facts recited in subsection (a) are true and correct;
- (2) The use of on-site sewage facilities in Travis County, Texas, is causing or may cause pollution and is injuring or may injure the public health; and
- (3) It is necessary and appropriate to adopt this chapter of the Travis County Code, which is to be entitled "Rules of Travis County, Texas for On-Site Sewage Facilities."

48.002. Definitions and Acronyms.

Words and phrases in this chapter have the same meaning they have in Chapter 366 (On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems) of the Texas Health and Safety Code and Chapter 285 (On-Site Sewage Facilities) of Title 30 of the Texas Administrative Code. The following words and terms in this section, when used in this chapter, have the following meanings:

- (1) "Accessory use" means a use which is incidental and subordinate to the principal use of the parcel of land on which it is located.
- (2) "Accessory structure" means a structure which is on the same parcel of property as the principal structure to be insured and which is incidental to the use of the principal structure.
- (3) "Authorized Agent" means the Travis County Commissioners Court or its designee, the Travis County Transportation and Natural Resources Department.
- (4) "Commissioners Court" means the Travis County Commissioners Court.
- (5) "County Executive" means the county executive of the Travis County Transportation and Natural Resources Department or his designee.
- (6) "Development" means any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including, but not limited to, the construction of buildings or other structures, a change in the use of improved or unimproved real estate, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, surfacing, excavation operations, drilling operations, the storage of equipment or materials, and the clearing of land for the purpose of preparing a site for any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate.
- (7) "License to Operate" means written permission from the Permitting Authority to operate an on-site sewage facility.
- (8) "Lot" or "site" means the unit of land area served by an on-site sewage facility.
- (9) "Maintenance" means required or routine performance checks, examinations, upkeep, cleaning, or mechanical adjustments to an on-site sewage facility, including replacement of pumps, filters, aerator lines, valves, or electrical components. Maintenance does not include alterations.
- (10) "On-site sewage facility" or "OSSF" means a system that:
 - (A) does not treat or dispose of more than 5,000 gallons of sewage each day; and
 - (B) is used only for disposal of sewage produced on a site where any part of the system is located.
- (11) "Permit to Construct" means written permission from the Permitting Authority to construct an on-site sewage facility showing the date the permission was granted.
- (12) "Permitting Authority" means the Travis County Commissioners Court or its designee, the Travis County Transportation and Natural Resources Department.

- (13) "Person" means an individual, association, partnership, corporation, organization, business trust, political subdivision, state or federal agency, or an agent or employee thereof.
- (14) "Repair" means to replace any components of an on-site sewage facility in situations not included under emergency repairs according to 30 TAC § 285.35 (relating to emergency repairs), excluding maintenance. The replacement of tanks or drainfields is considered a repair and requires a permit for the entire OSSF system.
- (15) "Residential unit" means a structure that is used for habitation.
- (16) "Sewage" means waste that:
 - (A) is primarily organic and biodegradable or decomposable; and
 - (B) generally originates as human, animal, or plant waste from certain activities, including the use of toilet facilities, washing, bathing, and preparing food.
- (17) "TAC" means the Texas Administrative Code.
- (18) "TCEQ" means the Texas Commission for Environmental Quality or its successive agencies.
- (19) "TCEQ Rules" means the rules promulgated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for on-site sewage facilities in Title 30 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 30, Subchapters A and G, and Chapter 285 and all future amendments and revisions to those rules.

48.003 Conflicts

- (a) This chapter repeals and replaces any other on-site sewage facility orders or parts of orders of Travis County, Texas.
- (b) All Codes or policies, or parts of Codes or policies of Travis County related to this chapter that are in conflict with the provisions of this chapter are hereby repealed.

48.004 On-Site Sewage Facility Regulation and Enforcement

Travis County, Texas clearly understands there are technical criteria, legal requirements, and administrative procedures and duties associated with regulating on-site sewage facilities, and will fully enforce Chapter 366 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapters 7 and 37 of the Texas Water Code, and associated rules referenced in section 48.006 of this chapter.

48.005 Jurisdictional Area/Applicability

This chapter applies to:

- (a) the unincorporated areas of Travis County, Texas except:
 - (1) the areas regulated under an order adopted by a local governmental entity other than Travis County; and
 - (2) the areas have been annexed by the City of Austin for the limited purpose of public health;
- (b) areas within the corporate limits of Webberville and San Leanna;
- (c) areas within the corporate limits of Leander located within Travis County; and areas within the territorial limits of a local governmental entity located in whole or in part in Travis County that:
 - (1) has been delegated the authority by the TCEQ executive director to implement and enforce the rules adopted under Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 366; and
 - (2) has entered into an interlocal agreement with Travis County for the enforcement of that local governmental entity's OSSF rules.

48.006 Compliance with On-Site Sewage Facility Rules

- (a) Any person who has an ownership interest in an on-site sewage facility or who participates in any activity relating to the development of planning materials, construction, installation, alteration, repair, extension, operation, maintenance, permitting, inspection, or investigation of an on-site sewage facility within the jurisdictional area of Travis County, Texas must comply with the TCEQ Rules and all applicable provisions of this chapter.
- (b) A person must obtain a Permit to Construct from the County in accordance with this chapter before the person constructs, installs, alters, repairs, extends, or modifies an OSSF unless the OSSF is excluded or exempted under State law or this chapter.
- (c) Any person who has an ownership interest in an on-site sewage facility within the jurisdictional area of Travis County must obtain a License to Operate from the County before the person operates or allows any person to operate the on-site sewage facility.

48.007 TCEQ Rules Adopted; Incorporation by Reference

- (a) Travis County adopts the rules promulgated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for on-site sewage facilities in Title 30 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 30, Subchapters A and G, and Chapter 285.
- (b) The TCEQ Rules and all future amendments and revisions to them are incorporated by reference and made a part of this chapter.

48.008 Authority to Act

All officials and employees of Travis County, Texas who have duties under the TCEQ Rules are authorized to perform those duties as are required of them under the TCEQ Rules and the provisions of this chapter.

48.009 Adoption of Rules that are More Stringent

- (a) Travis County, Texas, adopts certain OSSF rules that are more stringent than those adopted by the TCEQ.
- (b) The more stringent rules adopted by the Travis County Commissioners Court shall take precedence over any less stringent rules adopted by TCEQ.
- (c) Travis County's more stringent rules are set forth in subchapter B.

48.010 Additional Findings

The Travis County Commissioners Court finds that it is proper and necessary to adopt OSSF standards that are more stringent than the standards adopted by TCEQ because:

- (a) Protecting water resources is vital to human health, and some residents within Travis County depend heavily upon groundwater for their drinking water;
- (b) The population of Travis County is projected to double by the year 2050;
- (c) A significant amount of the projected future growth within the unincorporated areas of Travis County is expected to rely on on-site sewage facilities;
- (d) The adoption of OSSF regulations that are more stringent within the Recharge Zone of the Edwards Aquifer (including those land areas situated above the Trinity Aquifer Recharge Zones) and other aquifers which have environmentally sensitive rapid recharge conditions is necessary and appropriate to avert public health hazards resulting from the projected increased use of on-site sewage facilities and the increased usage of water; and
- (e) The more stringent rules will provide greater public health and safety protection for the residents of Travis County.

48.011 Local Administrative Procedures

The County's local administrative procedures are set forth in subchapter C.

48.012 Duties and Powers of Designated Representatives

- (a) The Transportation and Natural Resources Department of Travis County, Texas, will ensure that each individual who acts as a designated

representative for Travis County within Travis County's jurisdictional area is certified by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality before that individual assumes duties and responsibilities as a designated representative of Travis County, Texas.

- (b) Each of Travis County's designated representatives is authorized to review permit applications, site evaluations, and planning materials and to conduct inspections of on-site sewage facilities.

48.013 Collection of Fees

- (a) All fees collected under this chapter must be made payable to Travis County, Texas and must be paid in accordance with fee schedules adopted by the Commissioners Court as authorized by law.
- (b) Each fee collected by Travis County for an application for a Permit to Construct must include a fee of \$10 that Travis County must forward to the TCEQ Water Resources Management Account in accordance with Chapter 367 of the Texas Health and Safety Code.

48.014 Appeals

Persons aggrieved by an action or decision of the designated representative may appeal such action or decision by mailing, within 30 days of the action or decision, a written appeal to the Travis County Commissioners Court.

47.015 Enforcement Plan

- (a) Travis County, Texas, clearly understands that, as a minimum, it must follow the requirements in 30 TAC Section 285.71 (Authorized Agent Enforcement of OSSFs).
- (b) This chapter adopts and incorporates all applicable provisions related to on-site sewage facilities, which includes, but is not limited to, those found in Chapters 341 and 366 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapters 7, 26, and 37 of the Texas Water Code, 30 TAC Chapter 30, Subchapters A and G, and 30 TAC Chapter 285.
- (c) At the request of the Commissioners Court, the County Attorney or other prosecuting attorney for the County may file an action in a court of competent jurisdiction to do one or more of the following:
 - (1) Enjoin the violation or threatened violation of a requirement established by or adopted by the Commissioners Court under this chapter;
 - (2) Seek civil or criminal penalties as provided by law; and
 - (3) Take all actions or seek any penalty authorized under law, including the penalties and enforcement provisions of Chapters 341 and 366 of the Texas Health and Safety Codes, Chapters 7 and 26 of the

Texas Water Code, 30 TAC Chapter 285, and the provisions of this chapter.

48.016 Severability

It is the intention of the Commissioners Court of Travis County, Texas, that the phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and sections of this chapter are severable, and if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, or section of this chapter is declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, or sections of this chapter, since the same would have been enacted by the Commissioners Court without incorporation in this chapter of such unconstitutional phrases, clause, sentence, paragraph, or section.

If any provision of this chapter or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the validity of the remainder of this chapter and the application thereof to other persons and circumstances shall not be affected.

48.017 Relinquishment of Order

- (a) If the Commissioners Court of Travis County, Texas decides that it no longer wishes to regulate on-site sewage facilities in its area of jurisdiction, the Commissioners Court, as the authorized agent, and the TCEQ shall follow the procedures outlined in 30 TAC Section 285.10 (d) (1) through (4).
- (b) After relinquishing its OSSF authority, the authorized agent understands that it may be subject to charge-back fees in accordance with 30 TAC Section 285.10(d)(5) and Section 285.14 after the date that delegation has been relinquished.

48.018 Effective Date²

This chapter shall be in full force and effect from and after its date of approval as required by law and upon the approval of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

48.019-48.030 Reserved for Expansion

² The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality approved the rules on February 23, 2015.

Subchapter B

48.031 Travis County's More Stringent Rules

This subchapter sets forth the more stringent rules adopted by Travis County, Texas.

48.032 Facility Planning [285.4]

- (a) All property that will use an on-site sewage facility for sewage disposal must be evaluated for overall site suitability.
- (b) Unless the lot or tract is exempted under 30 TAC Section 285.4(b)(1), the minimum lot size for a residential structure served by an OSSF, regardless of whether the lot or tract is served by a public water supply, is one acre.
- (c) Residential Structures Served by OSSFs.
 - (1) Each residential unit served by an OSSF is considered a separate structure. Except as provided in Paragraph (2), multiple residential units may be on a single lot or site only if the lot or site contains at least one acre of land for each residential unit.
 - (2) A lot or site of at least one acre in size that was created before TCEQ's approval of this chapter and that has a single-family dwelling located on it may have one additional residential unit placed on the lot or site as an accessory structure for accessory use if:
 - (A) having more than one residential unit on the lot or site does not violate restrictions in a plat, deed, or restrictive covenant for the lot;
 - (B) all other requirements of Chapter 285 of Title 30 of the Texas Administrative Code and the Travis County Code are met; and
 - (C) the lot or site owner files a restrictive covenant in the Official Public Records of Travis County, Texas that:
 - (i) prohibits the addition of any more habitable structures on the lot or site without approval by the local entity having OSSF jurisdiction over the lot;
 - (ii) prohibits the residential units from being conveyed or transferred to separate owners without approval by the local entity having OSSF jurisdiction over the lot;
 - (iii) prohibits any further subdivision of the lot or site without approval by the local entity having OSSF jurisdiction over the lot; and
 - (iv) provides that the restrictive covenant is enforceable by the owners of adjacent land, TCEQ, and the local

governmental entity having OSSF jurisdiction over the lot.

- (3) If the County Executive determines that having more than one residential unit on the lot or site will not adversely affect public health, safety, or welfare, the County Executive may waive the requirement that a plat be approved for structures and a lot or site meeting the requirements of this subsection.
- (d) **Review of Planning Materials.** Persons proposing single-family residential developments, condominium developments, multi-unit residential developments, manufactured housing communities, commercial developments, or any other type of development with structures served by OSSFs must submit planning materials for these developments to the Permitting Authority as set forth in Subchapter C, Travis County Local Administrative Procedures, and obtain the Permitting Authority's written approval of the planning materials before submitting an OSSF application.
- (e) **Notice in Deed and Plat Records**
- (1) Where approval of on-site sewage facilities in a development will be granted based on conditions that restrict lots with regard to on-site sewage facilities, those conditions shall be reflected by appropriate plat notes or restrictive covenants filed in the Official Public Records of Travis County, Texas. The County will not issue a Permit to Construct or a License to Operate unless a property owner has recorded all plat notes and restrictive covenants required by the County.
 - (2) In addition to the requirements set forth in 30 TAC Chapter 285, on each new plat, the following note shall be included (along with any specific restrictions imposed):

This subdivision is subject to all the terms and conditions of Chapter 48, Travis County Code, Rules of Travis County, Texas for On-Site Sewage Facilities. These rules require, among other things, that a construction permit be obtained from Travis County before an on-site sewage facility can be constructed, altered, modified, or repaired in the subdivision and that a license to operate be obtained from Travis County before an on-site sewage facility can be operated in the subdivision.

48.033 Application and Permitting Procedures (§§285.3, 285.5 and 285.6)

- (a) **No Exemptions.** All OSSFs in the jurisdictional area of Travis County are subject to the provisions of this chapter regardless of the size of the lot on which the OSSF is located.
- (1) Except for emergency repairs that are authorized by 30 TAC Section 285.35, a person must obtain a Permit to Construct from the

County before constructing, installing, altering, extending, or repairing an OSSF.

- (2) An individual who makes an emergency repair to an OSSF must notify the Permitting Authority, in writing, within 72 hours after starting the emergency repair. The notice must include a detailed description of the methods and materials used in the repairs.
 - (3) The Permitting Authority has discretion to require an inspection of the emergency repairs.
- (b) Local Procedures. Local Administrative Procedures to be used in Travis County in administering 30 TAC Section 285.5 are set forth in Subchapter C.
- (c) Time Limit on Applications. An application for an OSSF Permit to Construct expires one year after the date the application fee is paid for if the applicant has been unable to obtain an OSSF Permit to Construct from the County during that one-year period. After an application has expired, an applicant for an OSSF Permit to Construct must submit a new application and pay a new application fee.
- (d) Permit to Construct/License to Operate. Under Travis County procedures, the licensing of an on-site sewage facility is separated into two parts: the Permit to Construct, which is a permit that is issued by Travis County for construction of an onsite wastewater system specifically designed for a specific use, and the License to Operate, which is a license that is issued by Travis County that allows an onsite wastewater system constructed in accordance with the Permit to Construct to be operated as designed, to actively put through, treat, and dispose of sewage waste being generated by the use for which the system is designed.
- (1) A Permit to Construct expires 12 months from the date of issuance, or upon completion of construction, whichever is sooner. The County may grant a 30-day permit extension if there have been no changes to the design plan approved by the Permitting Authority and the owner applies for the extension at least 30 days prior to the expiration of the Permit to Construct. A fee will be charged towards the cost of the extension and re-issuance of permits. After a Permit to Construct has expired, a person who seeks to construct an OSSF must submit a new application and pay a new application fee in order to obtain a new Permit to Construct.
 - (2) Certification by Designer. The Permitting Authority will not issue a License to Operate for an OSSF that was designed by a professional engineer or registered sanitarian until the owner provides the Permitting Authority with:
 - (A) the engineer or sanitarian's written assurance that the engineer or sanitarian has inspected the OSSF and

determined that it has been installed as designed and specified; and

- (B) an accurate as-built drawing of the OSSF.
- (3) A License to Operate is limited to authorization to operate an OSSF in accordance with the design and use approved by the Permitting Authority.
- (4) Termination of License to Operate. A License to Operate issued under this chapter or previous OSSF rules adopted by the County may be revoked by the Permitting Authority if:
 - (A) the OSSF fails;
 - (B) the OSSF receives more sewage than the amount for which it was approved;
 - (C) the OSSF receives non-sewage wastewater;
 - (D) a structure connected to the OSSF exceeds or violates the terms of the License to Operate;
 - (E) the property on which the OSSF is located is used for a purpose other than that described in the original application for the Permit to Construct the OSSF; or
 - (F) the OSSF is operated in a manner that does not conform to the design and use approved by the Permitting Authority.
- (5) It is a violation of this Chapter for any person to operate or allow any person to operate an OSSF for which the License to Operate has been terminated or for which a License to Operate has not been issued by the Permitting Authority.
- (6) An owner of an OSSF for which a License to Operate has been terminated may apply in writing to the Permitting Authority to have the License to Operate re-instated.

The Permitting Authority may re-instate a License to Operate if the owner of the OSSF has paid all applicable fees, and the Permitting Authority determines, after conducting an inspection of the OSSF, that the OSSF is functioning properly and that the owner of the OSSF has taken affirmative steps to ensure that the OSSF will be operated only in accordance with the design and use previously approved by the Permitting Authority.

- (e) The County will not issue a suitability letter for a TCEQ stormwater pollution prevention plan permit until the Permitting Authority determines that an application for an OSSF Permit to Construct and/or application for a subdivision proposing to use OSSF's is administratively complete.

48.034 Maintenance Requirements (§285.7)

- (a) This section applies to OSSFs for which maintenance is required as specified in Table XII of 30 TAC Section 285.91 and that serve single-family dwellings.
- (b) At the end of the initial two-year service policy, a homeowner may perform maintenance activities for an OSSF that serves the homeowner's single family dwelling only if the homeowner:
 - (1) has taken the training and passed the test required for a TCEQ registered maintenance technician, as required in 30 TAC Section 30.245(b), and has provided the results of the test and proof of attendance at the training to the County; or
 - (2) has taken equivalent training specifically for homeowners, as determined by the County, has passed any tests that were required as part of the training, and has provided to the County the results of any tests that were part of the training and proof of attendance at the training.
- (c) A homeowner who performs maintenance activities for an OSSF that serves the homeowner's single family dwelling must comply with the testing and reporting requirements set forth in 30 TAC Section 285.7(e)(1)-(3) for maintenance providers.
- (d) Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, the owner of a single-family dwelling who has been personally maintaining the OSSF for the single-family dwelling must obtain a maintenance contract for the OSSF and provide a copy of the contract to the County within ten days after the County notifies the owner that:
 - (1) The owner has violated Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 366, a rule adopted pursuant to Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 366, or this chapter, and the owner chooses to enter into a contract for the maintenance of the system instead of personally correcting the violation; or
 - (2) The owner has, within three years of a previous violation, committed another violation of Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 366, a rule adopted pursuant to Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 366, or this chapter.
- (e) In addition to the information required by 30 TAC Chapter 285, all maintenance/inspection reports, including reports prepared by homeowners who provide maintenance on their own OSSFs, must include the following:
 - (1) the reporting of any alterations to the OSSF that have not been authorized by the County;
 - (2) the condition of the spray area (if applicable);

- (3) the permit number for the Permit to Construct;
 - (4) the printed name and signature of the maintenance provider or homeowner/property owner if the homeowner is submitting the report;
 - (5) the physical address of the OSSF location; and
 - (6) the physical address, business address, business telephone number, and emergency phone number of the maintenance provider.
- (f) In addition to the information required by 30 TAC Chapter 285, all maintenance/inspection contracts must include the following:
- (1) the permit number for the Permit to Construct;
 - (2) the printed name and signature of the maintenance provider or homeowner if the homeowner is submitting the report;
 - (3) the physical address of the OSSF location; and
 - (4) the physical address, business address, business telephone number, and emergency phone number of the maintenance provider.

48.035 Site Evaluation (§285.30)

Travis County requires that backhoe pits be excavated to a depth of two feet below the bottom of the proposed excavation or to a restrictive horizon, whichever is less for soil evaluations. Profile holes are required to be excavated and soil analysis reports must be submitted with all applications for Permits to Construct on-site sewage facilities.

48.036 Criteria for Sewage Treatment Systems (§285.32)

- (a) Testing of Tanks. Following installation and prior to final backfilling, all tanks in the system, including but not limited to septic tanks, pump tanks, trash tanks, and aerobic treatment units, shall be tested by being filled to the outlet with clean water and checked 24 hours later for leaks and structural integrity.
- (b) Non-residential Treatment Requirements. Non-residential systems shall have a minimum of six-day retention time in a septic tank, or in a pre-treatment tank prior to a treatment unit; or provide equalization tanks per 30 TAC Section 285.34 (b)(4)

48.037 Criteria for Sewage Disposal Systems (§285.33)

- (a) Limits on Daily Application Rate. Except as provided in Paragraphs (1) and (2), the total daily application of effluent from an OSSF may not

exceed 60 gallons per tenth of an acre of the lot or site. Fractional acreage shall be rounded down to the nearest tenth of an acre.

- (1) For parcels that were legally platted before TCEQ's approval of this chapter and that are less than or equal to four-tenths of an acre, up to 240-gallons per day may be allowed.
- (2) For proposed developments with less than 50% total impervious cover, including OSSF drainfield as impervious cover, an exemption may be granted to allow a higher effluent application rate.

(b) Disposal Processes - Proprietary - Drip Irrigation

- (1) There shall be a minimum of two feet of soil between the drip emitter and groundwater; however, only one foot of soil is required where secondary treatment is used.
- (2) Drip irrigation systems shall be designed using a maximum application rate of 0.15 gallon per square foot per day.
- (3) Drip irrigation systems shall provide a minimum of two feet per second flushing velocity.
- (4) There shall be a minimum of one foot of soil between the drip emitter and solid or fractured rock.

(c) Disposal Processes - Non-Standard - Low Pressure Dosed Drainfield - Drainfield Criteria

- (1) There shall be a minimum of three feet of undisturbed soil between the sidewalls of multiple excavations.
- (2) Low pressure dose designs shall include consideration for elevation changes between laterals and friction losses in manifold piping between lateral lines.
- (3) When on sloping ground, supply manifolds shall connect to the highest lateral in a drainfield zone.

(d) Disposal Processes - Non-standard - Surface Irrigation Systems.

- (1) Surface irrigation shall be conducted during the night-time hours, preferably just before sunrise.
- (2) Consideration must be given towards controlling run-off from the disposal area during rain events.
- (3) The minimum setback to a property line is 25 feet.

(e) Disposal Processes - Non-Standard - Soil Substitution Drainfields. Soil Substitution beds are required to use pressure dose application. Pipe and orifice spacing for the distribution piping is to be the same as for current mound design requirements.

(f) Pipe Bedding. Pipes such as sewer pipes from the structure to the treatment facility and from the treatment facility to the disposal

component shall be bedded with four inches of Class Ib, Class II, or Class III soil with less than 30% gravel. The bedding soil shall be free of organic material and any rocks or grains larger than ½ inch.

- (g) Pump Tank Sizing. Pump tank shall be sized to provide at least one full day of flow above the alarm on setting unless dual pumps are used per requirements of 30 TAC 285.34(b)(3).
- (h) Installations on Slopes Exceeding 10%. Drainfields with finished grades exceeding 10% shall either provide erosion control matting or 80% vegetative cover prior to final inspection.

(48.038-48.050 Reserved for Expansion)

Subchapter C.

48.051 Local Administrative Procedures

- (a) This Subchapter sets forth procedures that must be followed by persons who are applying for a Permit to Construct or a License to Operate an OSSF. This Subchapter also sets out the County's enforcement authority.
- (b) The Local Administrative Procedures set forth in this Subchapter are designed to further the ability of the Permitting Authority in assuring that a person does not:
 - (1) install, construct, alter, extend, or repair an OSSF without obtaining a Permit to Construct from the Permitting Authority;
 - (2) operate or maintain an OSSF or discharge (includes deposit, conduct, drain, throw or otherwise release or dispose of wastewater or effluent, or to allow any of these acts) sewage or sewage effluent into an OSSF without obtaining a License to Operate from the Permitting Authority; or
 - (3) cause, permit or allow the operation of or the maintenance of an OSSF in a manner that will cause, or may tend to cause pollution, injury to the public health, or nuisance conditions.

48.052 Enforcement

In order to enforce this chapter, the Permitting Authority is authorized to:

- (a) enter private property to inspect or monitor incipient or existing OSSFs at all reasonable times and at any time there is reasonable cause to believe a violation of this chapter has been committed or is being committed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Permitting Authority or TCEQ may inspect an on-site sewage system using aerobic treatment at any time.

- (b) order the work being done on an OSSF in violation of this chapter to be stopped by notice in writing of the suspension or revocation of the permit to the person doing or causing the work to be done.
- (c) issue a written order to a person to immediately cease using any OSSF causing pollution or constituting a nuisance, or otherwise operating in violation of this chapter, and may seek legal process to enforce its orders.
- (d) revoke a License to Operate an individual onsite wastewater system if the system for which it has been issued is being operated in violation of this chapter, is not being operated within the manufacturer's specifications, does not have a valid maintenance contract when one is required, or becomes a public nuisance. A Notice of Violation for inappropriate operation shall first be issued by Travis County. If the violation for which the property owner is cited is not corrected within the time specified in the Notice of Violation, Travis County may revoke the License to Operate.
- (e) take any other action authorized by law to enforce local, state, and federal rules relating to OSSFs within the County's jurisdictional area.

48.053 Notice

- (a) Unless otherwise specified, any notice prepared by the County may be given by hand delivery or by US Mail. Notice by the County may also be accomplished by posting a sign on the property to which the notice refers.
- (b) Any notice that is required to be sent to the County must be given by:
 - (1) hand delivery or overnight courier to the Permitting Authority at 700 Lavaca, Suite 500, Austin, Texas 78701,
 - (2) United States Mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested, to the following address:

Travis County Transportation and Natural Resources Department
On-Site Wastewater Program
P.O. Box 1748
Austin, Texas 78767

48.054 Permit to Construct and License to Operate.

To facilitate the efficient implementation of this chapter:

- (a) The Permit to Construct is limited to the authorization to install, construct, alter, extend, or repair an OSSF in accordance with the planning materials approved by the Permitting Authority. It does not include authorization to operate the OSSF.
- (b) The License to Operate is not included in the Permit to Construct, but will be issued upon certification by the designer of record and final approval of construction by the Permitting Authority. The License to Operate will allow an OSSF to be operated in accordance with the approved planning

materials for the discharging of sewage into the facility for treatment and disposal or reuse.

- (c) The Permitting Authority may elect to not issue a Permit to Construct if the Permitting Authority determines that any portion of the proposed OSSF is located within 500 feet of the boundary of an area served by a private or public wastewater collection system that would, in the opinion of the Permitting Authority, be legally and technically feasible for the OSSF to connect to.

48.055 Variance Procedures

Variances from this chapter may be granted as provided in this subsection.

- (a) Requests for variances from this chapter shall be considered on an individual basis in accordance with the criteria specified in 30 TAC Section 285.3(c) and where site conditions (such as lot size, separation distance, and setbacks) are such that no alternative that complies with this chapter can be found.

- (b) The Commissioners Court authorizes the Permitting Authority to grant variances involving exceptions to technical construction standards or local setback and separation distances more stringent than State standards as long as the variance granted results in a system which ensures public health protection equivalent to that provided under the TCEQ Rules.

The Permitting Authority is authorized to grant administrative variances, including, for example, a variance to allow the construction of an OSSF in a drainage easement if the applicant has taken concrete steps to vacate the easement and there is no known opposition to the vacation of the drainage easement. The Permitting Authority may refer any request for variance to the Commissioners Court for direction.

- (c) A person desiring a variance to any requirement of this chapter shall file a written request with the Permitting Authority, stating the specific provision from which a variance is requested, and including any information which the requestor feels is pertinent to the request.
- (d) In granting a variance, the Commissioners Court or the Permitting Authority may specify terms and conditions determined to be necessary or advisable to ensure equivalent public health protection, such as requiring certain treatment levels, monitoring equipment, and procedures for design and/or operating and/or maintenance. The owner of the property shall allow the Permitting Authority to enter the property for the purpose of inspecting the facility at any reasonable time to ascertain that conditions are met.
- (e) Requests for variances requiring approval by the Commissioners Court will be submitted for Court consideration as follows:

- (1) The Permitting Authority shall review the request within 30 days of the completed request, formulate a recommendation to the Court, and make a written reply either requesting additional information or notifying the applicant of a Court date and of the Permitting Authority's recommendation to the Court.
 - (2) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, if the variance request is made in conjunction with an application for final plat approval under Chapter 82, Travis County Code, the request must be reviewed, acted on, and appealed within the time periods established under Chapter 82 in lieu of this chapter.
- (f) Procedures for consideration of requests for variances that may be granted by the Permitting Authority will be as follows:
- (1) Not later than 30 days after the receipt of a complete request for variance, the Permitting Authority shall review the request and reply to the applicant in writing, granting or denying the request, or requesting additional information. If the Permitting Authority does not reply in writing to an applicant within 30 days after receiving the applicant's request for variance, the request is denied.
 - (2) A person aggrieved by an action or decision of the Permitting Authority regarding the person's request for a variance may, within 30 days after the date of the document giving notice of the action or decision, or within 30 days after the action if no document is given, appeal to the Commissioners Court.

The appeal shall be initiated by filing a written objection with the Permitting Authority. The written objection shall state the specific action or decision being appealed, the relief requested, the person's reasons for requesting the relief, and a copy of the document, if any, giving notice of the action or decision appealed.
 - (3) The Permitting Authority shall notify the County Judge who shall place the matter on the agenda of the Commissioners Court in accordance with usual Court procedures. The Permitting Authority shall provide written notice of the time and place of the hearing before the Court to the person making the appeal.
 - (4) The Commissioners Court shall review the matter in the scheduled hearing, considering the materials submitted by the Permitting Authority and the person seeking the appeal, as well as any information and evidence that it considers relevant. The Commissioners Court shall render its decision no later than ten days after the conclusion of the hearing. If the Commissioners Court does not approve a request for variance within ten days after the hearing, the request is denied unless the Commissioners Court schedules an additional hearing and approves the variance at the subsequent hearing.

- (g) The Permitting Authority shall keep complete records of variances granted. The Permitting Authority shall make periodic reports to the Commissioners Court including locations, descriptions of the variances requested, the reasons for the variances, and Permitting Authority's justifications for the granting of the variances, as specified by the Court.

48.056 Submission of Planning Materials

The following planning materials, which must be prepared by a professional engineer or registered sanitarian, must be submitted with an application for a preliminary plan, final plat, or when proposing a manufactured housing community, condominium development, multi-unit residential development, business park, or other similar use that will use OSSFs for sewage disposal:

- (a) An accurate plan that complies with all applicable State of Texas and County standards and that shows each existing or proposed lot, its size, source of water, and the area available for disposal fields.
- (b) The geographic location of the development or subdivision and its proximity to streams and lakes.
- (c) Identification on the plan of the location of recharge features, which features must be indicated on the final plat.
- (d) Identification on the plan of planned or existing well locations and a sanitary zone with a 100-foot radius around private wells, and a 150-foot radius around public wells, within which no effluent disposal fields may be sited as set forth in this chapter.
- (e) A comprehensive drainage and 100-year floodplain impact plan.
- (f) Identification on the topographic map or plan of the 100-year floodplain and the floodway.
- (g) A report detailing the types of OSSFs to be considered and their compatibility with area-wide drainage and groundwater.
- (h) Results of a site evaluation for soil suitability in accordance with section 48.035 of this chapter based upon a number of soil profile holes which will provide a representative sample of soils. Profile holes shall be to a depth of five feet or to a limiting condition, whichever is shallower. Test locations shall be evenly distributed throughout the development and be representative of the soils within the development. Where soil conditions are variable, additional soil profile hole testing may be required in test sites determined by the Permitting Authority. An analysis of each soil layer in each profile hole shall be provided including soil classification, structure, gravel content percentage, and presence of mottles and/or groundwater.
- (i) Depiction on the plan of the areas and depths of scalping or fill and road cuts for the purpose of addressing setback requirements.

- (j) Notification on the plan of the presence of mottled soils or water in soil profile holes indicating the groundwater table is less than five feet below the surface as the surface exists or as it will be after grading and filling that may be required in the development.
- (k) Depiction on the plan of areas of greater than 30% slope with a cumulative total of areas with greater than 30% per lot.
- (l) Any additional planning materials that the Permitting Authority and/or staff of the Permitting Authority determine are necessary to demonstrate the applicant's compliance with the requirements of this chapter.

48.057 Procedures for Reviewing Planning Materials

- (a) Preliminary Review. Preliminary review may be requested by the applicant, including scheduling an on-site inspection by the Permitting Authority. To obtain preliminary review, an applicant shall submit at least the materials listed in Section 48.056(a), (b), (d), and (f).
- (b) Final Review. The Permitting Authority shall review the final planning materials for compliance with this chapter and recommendations made for the preliminary review, if any. Changes in the planning materials may require additional review. Survey and staking of individual lots is required before the final review.
- (c) Final Plat Approval. If reviewed in conjunction with an application for final plat approval, the Permitting Authority shall make a written recommendation to the Commissioners Court within 45 days of a proper and complete submittal of planning materials.
 - (1) Approval. If the recommendation is for approval of the subdivision as proposed for use with OSSFs, the Permitting Authority shall continue to process the plat, preliminary plan, or basic development permit for approval.
 - (2) Approval with Conditions or Denial. If the recommendation is for approval with conditions or for denial, the applicant may appeal as provided in Chapter 82, Travis County Code.
- (d) Limits of Approval. An approval recommendation under this subsection does not constitute either a Permit to Construct or a License to Operate for a specific OSSF.

48.058 Permit to Construct

- (a) Application
 - (1) Except for making emergency repairs that are authorized by 30 TAC Section 285.35, no person may construct, install, repair, alter, or extend an OSSF unless the person has first obtained a Permit to Construct from the Permitting Authority.

- (2) In addition to other requirements, a property owner who seeks to have an OSSF constructed, installed, repaired, altered, or extended on that person's property shall submit a complete "Application for On-Site Sewage Facility Permit to Construct" to the Permitting Authority. The owner or an agent of the owner may seek information and/or assistance pertaining to the requirements for design of an OSSF for a specific property once application has been made.
 - (3) To be considered administratively complete, an application must include all the information specified in the "Application for On-Site Sewage Facility Permit to Construct," including:
 - (A) construction planning materials that demonstrate that the proposed OSSF complies with this chapter. Construction planning materials that are prepared by a registered sanitarian or licensed professional engineer must include the signature and official seal of the professional as well as the date of preparation.
 - (B) the results of a site evaluation as required by section 48.035 of this chapter.
 - (C) the floor plan of all the structures serving as the generating unit shall be included with the application for a permit to construct an onsite wastewater system. Square footages, labels, and dimensions must be included for clarity.
 - (D) a statement stating that the site has been marked by a sign, visible from the road frontage, that is at least 12" x 24", bearing the street address.
 - (4) An application must be accompanied by payment of required fees.
- (b) Site Inspection
- (1) After an administratively complete application has been received by the County, the Permitting Authority shall conduct an inspection of the site on which the OSSF is to be constructed, and shall make a finding on the issuance of a Permit to Construct, based upon the information in the complete application and any other information available to the Permitting Authority.
 - (A) Upon a finding by the Permitting Authority that construction may begin, the County will issue a Permit to Construct to the applicant. The applicant must post the permit in a conspicuous manner at the site at all times during construction.
 - (B) If the Permitting Authority determines that a Permit to Construct cannot be issued, the Permitting Authority shall notify the applicant in writing of the reasons why the permit cannot be issued.

- (2) The construction, installation, extension, or repair of an OSSF shall be made in accordance with the approved design and requirements of the Permit to Construct.
- (c) Construction Inspections.
- (1) The Permitting Authority shall inspect installations of OSSFs in accordance with the inspection schedule established in the Permit to Construct. Each type of system will have an included number of inspections given in the inspection schedule. Any additional inspections required will incur an additional fee per inspection.
 - (2) Components of an OSSF may not be installed or covered until required inspections have been made and approval has been obtained from the Permitting Authority for that stage of construction.
 - (3) The applicant or installer shall notify the Permitting Authority that an inspection is desired at least two working days, excluding weekends and County-designated holidays, before the need for each inspection.
 - (4) The applicant or installer shall provide whatever reasonable assistance the Permitting Authority requests in order to make each inspection.
 - (5) The inspection of drip emitters in place and uncovered is required except where drip emitters are installed by the "plowed-in" method. When "plowed-in" the connections of all drip emitter tubing to the header piping will be uncovered for inspection.

48.059 License to Operate

- (a) New OSSFs. After final inspection of a newly installed OSSF, the Permitting Authority shall make a finding on whether to issue a License to Operate, based upon the information obtained from the inspections and any other information available to the Permitting Authority.
- (b) Upon a finding that the use of the new OSSF will not cause pollution, injury to the public health, or nuisance conditions and is not in conflict with this chapter, other provisions of the Travis County Code, the Permitting Authority will issue a License to Operate the OSSF.
- (c) Upon a finding that a License to Operate cannot be issued, the Permitting Authority shall notify the applicant in writing and shall include the reasons for denying the issuance of a license.

48.060 Affidavit Forms

Sample affidavit forms for use under this chapter will be provided by the Permitting Authority. The maintenance affidavit must include the following language:

The OSSF shall be covered by a continuous service policy for the first two years. After the initial two-year service policy, the owner of an aerobic treatment system for a single family residence shall either obtain a maintenance contract within 30 days or maintain the system personally.

48.061 Recording of Designated Representative's License Number

The Designated Representative must record the Designated Representative's license number on all items prepared by the Designated Representative.