



Sewage tank registration: How non-registered tanks can be used

Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems

Introduction

In an effort to protect Minnesota's groundwater quality and public health, changes were made to Minn. R. ch. 7080 in 2008 and 2011 to verify that sewage tanks have adequate structural integrity and are constructed to be watertight. These rules took effect on January 1, 2013, and have resulted in confusion in terms of whether a non-registered tank can be installed and if so, who has to do what to make it happen.

Sewage tanks include the following types of tanks: septic tanks, trash tanks, holding tanks, pump tanks, surge storage tanks, recirculation tanks, privy vaults, and other processing tanks.

How are sewage tanks verified?

In order to aid cities, counties, designers, installers, etc., the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) maintains a list of manufactured tanks deemed to adequately meet requirements of Minn. R. 7080.2010. As manufacturers apply to be included on this list, they also have the option to provide their website link to give additional information on these tanks to interested parties.

The goal of having this list is to save counties and other local units of government time by not having to complete the tank verification process on their own. It should also save manufacturers time by not requiring them to provide multiple verifications to public and private individuals.

Where is the list?

The list is located at the MPCA website: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/water/water-types-and-programs/subsurface-sewage-treatment-system-ssts/sewage-tanks-product-registration.html>

Basic information about the tanks, such as model number, manufacturer, liquid capacity, etc., is also available on the site.

What if the proposed tank is not on the list?

If not on the list, can the tank be installed? Yes, but with some conditions. The rules recognized that in some cases, modifications to registered tanks or one of a kind tanks would be needed for site specific situations. The rule allows for this needed flexibility in Minn. R. 7080.1900 as follows:

Sewage tanks serving ISTS must meet or exceed the applicable requirements of parts 7080.1910 to 7080.2030 unless otherwise approved by a licensed professional engineer and approved by the local unit of government.

Modifications to registered tanks or one of a kind tanks are allowed provided a licensed Professional Engineer (manufacturer's licensed P.E.) signs off that the tank will still meet Minn. R. 7080.2010, and the local unit of government accepts the proposed changes to the registered tank or the one of a kind tank.

This flexibility was developed in rule to allow for easier approval of one of a kind tanks or registered tanks with slight modifications made to accommodate a specific installation.

The following are four examples illustrating this flexibility with sign-off by a Professional Engineer and is not meant to be all-inclusive:

- a large tank that is custom built for one system
- a registered tank that needs to have the inlet location changed to accommodate a specific installation
- a registered tank that needs to be repurposed from a septic tank to a pump tank or a pump tank to a holding tank or many other possible combinations
- a tank that is reinforced to allow vehicle traffic over the tank

More information

For more information on the tank assessment process, please contact the MPCA at 651-296-6300 or 800-657-3864.