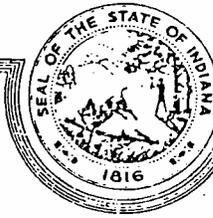


STATE OF INDIANA



INDIANAPOLIS

STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Address Reply to:
Indiana State Board of Health
1330 West Michigan Street
P. O. Box 1964
Indianapolis, IN 46206

December 22, 1981

TO: All Local Health Officers

FROM: Durland H. Patterson, Jr., Chief
Area Personnel Section
Division of Sanitary Engineering
Indiana State Board of Health

SUBJECT: Individual Home Aerobic Sewage Disposal Plants

We frequently receive inquiries concerning the use of individual home package aerobic units for sewage disposal. Topics most often discussed during these inquiries are off-lot discharge, absorption field size reduction and the use of these units to overcome various severe soil limitations.

The off-lot discharge of treatment tank effluent can only be approved by the Indiana Stream Pollution Control Board. (Indiana Stream Pollution Control Law, IC 13-1-3, and the Environmental Management Act, IC 13-7). No other agency in the State of Indiana has this authority. Additional reference to this requirement is made in Rule 410 IAC 6-8-3a, Residential On-Site Wastewater Disposal.

On August 20, 1968, the Indiana Stream Pollution Control Board established a policy relative to the use of individual home aerobic-type sewage disposal units. The essence of this policy is that these units can be used without Stream Pollution Control Board approval as long as they discharge to an absorption field with no outlet.

This office has never indicated that an aerobic unit cannot be used in place of a septic tank. If one of these units is to be used, it must meet the minimum standards as outlined in the 1980 edition of "Recommended Standards for Individual Sewage Systems," published by the Great Lakes-Upper Mississippi River Board of State Sanitary Engineers and sent to each local agency in the spring of 1980.

Unless the plans for the installation are approved by the Stream Pollution Control Board, the effluent from an aerobic unit must discharge into a soil absorption field designed and constructed in accordance with the provisions of Indiana State Board of Health Rule 410 IAC 6-8. Soil profile evaluation and absorption field sizing must still be determined by guidelines set forth in the soil manuals and

handbooks of the Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and where necessary, by percolation tests conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Rule.

Presently, Purdue University is studying aerobic systems, their effect upon various soil conditions, and the potential for reducing absorption system size. Until this study shows that absorption systems can be reduced in size when fed effluent from aerated systems, the reduction in system size will not be considered an acceptable alternative for general use. Unfortunately, research at the University of California at Berkely and at the University of Wisconsin has not disclosed any advantage in the use of aerobic systems when sizing the necessary effluent absorption system.

Any questions concerning this policy should be directed to Tim Decker or to Durland H. Patterson, Jr., Chief, Area Personnel Section, Division of Sanitary Engineering, Indiana State Board of Health, 317/633-0177.