

**GENERAL LISTENING SESSION
FOR THE
PROPOSED ONSITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM ORDINANCE**

**Session #3 Minutes
August 12, 2010
09:00AM to 11:00AM
2714 MEDIA CENTER DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90065**

The following is a summary of some of the session's questions and answers:

1. Q. Can you define septic system failure? Does excess water going through your septic system constitute failure?
A. The evidence for a failed system is visible effluent on the ground surface.
2. Q. Why should homeowners with septic systems pay for the self certification fees if the City of Los Angeles says that they trust us to upkeep the maintenance of our systems?
A. The homeowners are paying for the City of Los Angeles to continue to be a buffer between the city and the state. The OWTS program is independent of the general fund, therefore, any fees generated will be used to cover costs such as: administration, web and online permitting maintenance, inspections, technical support & consultation for homeowners, contractors, realtors, etc., outreach & public education. We are considering using some of the fees generated to help low income homeowners with failing septic systems to fix or upgrade their septic systems.
3. Q. Will there be a citation issued to the homeowner if he/she fails to repair their failed septic system?
A. Yes, usually if a septic system fails and sewer is not available, the homeowner will be issued a notice to correct within 30 days by the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety.
4. Q. As a buffer, is the City of Los Angeles going to help the homeowners pay for costs associated with being in compliance with the OWTS ordinance?
A. The City of Los Angeles has always had the buffer system in place. Employees are always looking for financial assistance opportunities for the residents within the City of Los Angeles.
5. Q. Is there going to be a point of sale requirement?
A. No
6. Q. In drafting this ordinance, has the Bureau of Sanitation been talking across the board to other city constituents and their various ordinances to discuss the impact that they may have on each other?
A. Yes, we have been in close contacts with other neighborhood councils that will be impacted by the septic ordinance.
7. Q. Are maps available on any City of Los Angeles website? Are there any maps available that show existing sewers?
A. Yes, at: [**www.navigateLA.lacity.org**](http://www.navigateLA.lacity.org)

8. Q. How did the City of Los Angeles decide which individual homes were high-risk?
A. Our MOU with the state specifically indicate that high- risk OWTS are based on two criteria:
- If the home is within 600 ft of impaired waterbodies 303(d) or
 - Within 900 ft. of drinking water wells.
9. Q. If you are a non-high risk property, are you expected to pay for an operating permit every 3 years?
A. No, only high-risk properties have to pay for an operating permit every 3 years.
10. Q. Will the City of Los Angeles send a notice to high-risk properties every 3 years? Even if there is a change in ownership?
A. We will notify all affected properties regarding major changes to requirements of the Ordinance.
11. Q. What does “minimum enforcement standards to ensure compliance” mean?
A. There will be a series of enforcement procedures to make sure that homeowners comply with the requirements of the MOU and the Ordinance, ranging from reminder notices and administrative orders to referral to the City Attorney Office
12. Q. Is there any requirement for the contractor /company that pumps your septic system to disclose whether your septic system has failed to the City of Los Angeles if they see a problem?
A. Yes, if the property is in a high-risk area.
14. Q. If a homeowner’s property is within 200 ft of the sewer can he take on the job of connecting to the sewer himself?
A. It depends. If it’s only a lateral connection, the homeowner may hire a licensed and bonded sewer contractor to connect to an already existing mainline sewer. Please visit the nearest Bureau of Engineering for any additional requirements or call 213-482-7030 or 818-376-4657.

The following is a summary of the session’s comments:

1. Excess water i.e. leaving the shower on for 5 hours straight should not constitute septic failure.
2. The OWTS ordinance does address existing cesspools. They are treated like all other OWTS.
3. The administrative procedures the City of Los Angeles will take if a homeowner is not in compliance with the ordinance will be discussed in the ordinance.
4. The need for clarification of the nominal fee charged for self-certification. There need to be a nexus between what the City of Los Angeles charges as fee

juxtaposed to the service they will be providing to justify the nominal fee. The City of Los Angeles needs to come up with specifics.

5. Our list of high-risk addresses are not being accurately updated. There is concern that the real estate industry will rely on our list and if it is not accurate, possible lawsuits could occur if a home was identified as non high risk and several years later the State update their 303(d) list and the home now becomes a high risk property.
6. Issue with the term “visual evidence.” How does the City of Los Angeles determine whether there is failure if it is not visual?
7. Septic System capacity issues. What if a homeowner’s tank is undersized?
8. BOS should put a link on our website that allows the public to view days in which they are allowed to water their lawns.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS:

	<u>ACTION ITEM</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>To be Complete by:</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>
1.	Update 303(d) list with disclaimer that the address list may change every two years due to the fact that the RWQCB updates their list of impaired water bodies 303(d) biannually.	BOS/WESD	08/17/10	Completed
2.				

Next Meetings:

1. Listening Session #1 (already held on 08/03/10)
2. Listening Session #2, Tuesday, (already held on 08/10/10)
3. Listening Session #3, Thursday, (already held on 08/12/10)
4. Listening Session #4, Thursday, (already held on 08/10/10)
5. Arleta NC. 6:30pm. Arleta First Assembly of God, 9757 Arleta ave. (8/17/10)
6. Arroyo Seco NC. 7pm. Ramona Hall 4580 N. Figueroa st. (8/24/10)