

# Enhanced Sewage Disposal Systems

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What is enhanced or alternative wastewater treatment?

Standard septic systems have a tank and leaching area. The tank separates the solids and the liquids. The leaching area accepts the waste water. The leaching area may be comprised of trenches, infiltrations or pits. Enhanced septic systems include additional treatments such as aeration or carbon filters and/or alternative leaching area such as sand filtration, infiltration, and/or geo-flow tubing. Santa Cruz County has 23,500 standard sewage disposal systems and almost 600 enhanced treatment systems.

### 2. When do properties need enhanced treatment?

Properties with onsite sewage disposal constraints: high groundwater, slow percolating soils, fast percolating soils, steep slopes, small lots and setback restrictions to waterways or cut banks may need enhanced treatment.

### 3. What types of enhanced treatment systems are there?

Below are enhanced treatment septic systems that are approved in Santa Cruz County:

Acqualogic - <http://acqualogic.com/about/the-acqualogic-team/>

AquaKlear - <http://www.BetterThanSeptic.com>

Orenco Advantex – <http://.orenco.com/>

Bio Microbics FAST – <http://.biomicrobics.com/?p=42>

Microseptec Enviroseptec – <http://www.microseptec.com/distributors-home.htm>

HOOT – <http://hootsystems.com/components/treatment.html>

Mound – <http://ahioline.osu.edu/aex-fact/0744.html>

Multi Flo - <http://sewageeq.com/Multi-flo.html>

Sand Filtration <http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/naturalresources/DD7672.html>

### 4. Is there extra cost for enhanced treatment?

Initial costs include consultant fees for septic system design, County fees for septic evaluation and permits; as well as contractor fees for system installation. After the system is installed, an operating fee is assessed that appear on the property tax bill. For some systems, there will be cost to run the aerobic pump and motor which will show up in your utility bill. Maintenance costs will be annual or biannual or quarterly depending on the systems operating requirements and service provider contract requirements.

### 5. What is the OSSP Program?

OSSP is the Onsite System Service Provider Program. This program was designed to oversee newly installed and existing enhanced treatment septic systems. EHS maintains the list of approved service providers (see back)

### 6. How does the OSSP Program affect a homeowner?

If the property has an enhanced treatment system, it will be monitored by the County for the life of the system. The system must have continued maintenance service and wastewater sampling that is submitted annually or as required by the contract. Environmental Health maintains a database of the contracts, maintenance, inspections, and sampling results. The records are available to the public.