

Significant Changes in Proposed 4/12/2020 LAMP from 2016 Standards

Chapter 7.38 of the Santa Cruz County Code was last amended on June 14, 2016. Proposed amendments of Chapter 7.38 to come into compliance with the State OWTS Policy and Central Coast Regional Water Board requirements are substantial and can be summarized as follows (with the relevant code section):

1. Large Systems: Systems with flows over 10,000 gallons per day and the must obtain a permit from the Regional Board. However, it is likely that the Regional Board may still delegate authority to the County to inspect system installations and provide some ongoing oversight. (7.38.042(H)(1))
2. Public Water Systems: There are additional setback requirements for new and replacement OWTS in the vicinity of water system wells and surface diversions.(7.38.043)
3. Slope: Installation of system replacements on slopes between 30% and 50% will require a slope stability prepared by a registered professional. New systems on slopes greater than 30% are still not allowed. (7.38.095(B)(4)(c), 7.38.130(F))
4. Soil Evaluation for Replacements: Soil testing and evaluation will be required for design of system repairs and upgrades unless adequate information for that site already exists, as demonstrated by the qualified professional. (7.38.120(A))
5. Karst: Areas with karst geology will require geologic evaluation and 100 ft setback from karst features. (7.38.120(E), 7.38.150(B)(4))
6. Design by Qualified Professional: OWTS, including repairs must be designed by a qualified professional, who will also be responsible for soil, groundwater and other site assessment. (7.38.120(H))
7. Dispersal Sizing: The design flow for a one bedroom house is increasing from 215 to 250 gpd with the design flows per additional bedroom increasing from 55 gpd to 75 gpd. The application rates will vary more with the soil percolation rate, going from 0.24 gpd/sf to 0.4 gpd/sf for a soil that percolates 35 MPI, as an example. (7.38.150(A)(2))
8. Stream Setback: System upgrades less than 100 ft from a stream will require enhanced treatment. (7.38.095(B)(2), 7.38.150(B)(9))
9. Drainageway and Stormwater infiltration Setback: The setback from a drainageway or stormwater device that flows more than 6 hours but less than 7 days after rain stops increases from 25 ft to 50 ft. if the drainageway or stormwater device is located downgradient of the dispersal system (7.38.130(I), 7.38.150 (B)(4)).
10. Unstable Land Mass: Dispersal systems must be set back 100 ft from an unstable land mass unless an approved geologist report indicates a closer setback is acceptable (7.38.150(B)(4), (5)).
11. Dispersal Depth: Standard dispersal trenches for new and upgraded systems will have a maximum infiltration surface of 4 square feet per linear foot. Up to 10 square feet per linear foot may be utilized if it is demonstrated that there are constraints on the parcel limiting available dispersal area. Enhanced treatment may be required for depth greater than 4 ft. (7.38.150(B)(1), (6)).
12. Groundwater Separation: The minimum groundwater separation for new and replacement systems is (7.38.150(B)(9)):
 - a. 8 ft for a conventional system in medium percolating soils (5-30 MPI)
 - b. 5 ft for conventional system in slow percolating soils ,
 - c. 3 ft for enhanced treatment systems without disinfection

- d. 2 ft for enhanced treatment with disinfection
 - e. 10 ft for all seepage pits, with enhanced treatment
 - f. 5 ft for greywater sumps
13. Sandy Soils: Enhanced treatment for nitrogen removal will be required for all new and replacement systems in sandy soils that percolate faster than 5 MPI. (7.38.150(B)(9); 7.38.183(A))
 14. Pavement: Installation of dispersal systems under pavement will require enhanced treatment (7.38.130(P), 7.38.150(B)(11)).
 15. County Approval of Qualified Professionals: All qualified professionals, contractors and service providers must be approved by the county and county approval may be suspended for violation of code. (7.38.190)
 16. Property Transfer Evaluation: All OWTS must be evaluated at the time of property transfer, including system condition, permitted status, performance, and likely requirements for future upgrades (7.38.215(D)). Those that have deferred installation of enhanced treatment will have to do so at that time (7.38.095(D)).