



Onsite Wastewater Practitioner Training

The next available training session dates are:

October 28, 29 & 30, 2015 Regina, SK

November 16, 17 & 18 Regina, SK

Registration for this training program is now open. For more information, please go online to <http://www.sowma.ca/training/> or contact the SOWMA office at 1-855-872-2650 (toll free).

Save the Date: SOWMA 2016 Convention and Trade Show

March 11, 2016

Saskatoon, SK

Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors – Saskatchewan Chapter Annual Convention and Trade Show

September 29 & 30, 2015

Regina, SK

Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) Annual Convention & Trade Show

March 7 – 10, 2016

Regina, SK

Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association Annual Convention

January 31 – February 3, 2016

Regina, SK

Find us on Facebook

SOWMA has launched a Facebook page. Come check us out at: <https://www.facebook.com/SaskatchewanOnsiteWastewaterManagementAssociation>

Did you know...?

...you can sign up to receive the SOWMA newsletter by email? It's easy. Just go to: <http://eepurl.com/3WSeL>. Don't miss an issue as we switch to monthly publications.



Ground Disturbance Trench & Excavation: Competent Person Training

This one day (8 hour) course is designed for persons who will be supervising, planning, executing, or participating in any ground disturbance activities in Saskatchewan.

The course is designed to focus on effective communication between all levels of workers, identify specific responsibilities adhering to the relevant legislation, and classify potential hazards using hazard assessments and control measures for safe excavation and the prevention of underground facility damage.

This course is being offered in Saskatoon on July 28 and July 29, 2015. For more information, please see United Academy website.

Public Education is the Key to the Sustainability of the Onsite Wastewater Industry

In the onsite wastewater industry, it is often commented that we live in a 'flush 'n forget' or 'fnf' society. Contractors who design and build onsite wastewater systems are bound by regulations and standards that demand increasingly more prescriptive and complex processes to ensure that onsite wastewater systems are environmentally responsible and that they ensure public health and safety.

Many contractors in Saskatchewan take extra training to ensure that they are at the forefront of their industry and have a clearer understanding of the significant role that soils treatment plays in the effective and safe return of onsite wastewater to the environment.

What happens when the system is built and the contractor leaves the site? This is the point where the homeowner takes over the operation and maintenance of the system. Most jurisdictions have regulations that point to the homeowner or end user as the responsible entity for ensuring their onsite wastewater system is compliant to the regulation and is in good working order. While this is not an unrealistic expectation, many homeowners do not have a clear understanding of maintenance requirements and protocols.

All onsite wastewater systems require maintenance. How complex the maintenance protocol is depends upon how complex the onsite wastewater system is. Many homeowners are under the impression that systems just need to be pumped out once in a while in order to be maintained properly, however that is only one component of the maintenance process.

(continued on next page)



What constitutes a maintenance inspection?

During a maintenance inspection, the maintainer will likely:

- Identify the system type: primary or secondary treatment? (Type 1, 2 or 3)
- This information may be available through permit documentation, but it will need to be confirmed. If there is no permit documentation as may be the case with older systems, then documentation will have to be prepared.
-
- Location of the system and its components on the property being served
- If the location of the system is unknown, the maintainer will have to locate the system. This may require digging out the tank lid and other components.
-
- Review the information on the property being served: number of bedrooms, bathrooms, water using appliances, etc.
 - Examine the condition of the system components: tank or packaged treatment plant, pump chamber, pump, distribution box, laterals and all components of the soils treatment area
- Perform an effluent quality inspection – odour, wastewater quality, etc. This may require effluent testing at a lab if the system involves a packaged treatment plant.
- Remove and clean the effluent filter.
- Clean or replace air filters
- Check pumps and floats. Ensure floats are functioning and the pump is receiving an appropriate charge to operate.
- Assess the depth of effluent in the tank and the level of sludge and fats, oils and grease to determine if the tank should be pumped.
- Inspect the soils treatment component (drainfield) for signs of failure or stress such as ponding, slumping, etc.
- Flush the laterals
- Check high water alarm to ensure it is functioning and homeowners have not disabled it.
- Check dose panel to ensure it is functioning and to confirm appropriate dosing frequency. Download information from the data logger if one is installed. This information can tell you if there have been any issues since the last maintenance call.
- Perform a visual inspection using cameras to examine the condition of the tank and laterals (this may be done as considered necessary by the maintainer performing the maintenance inspection).
-
- Provide a maintenance report to the client.

Educating homeowners on the importance of maintenance ensures that the onsite wastewater industry remains sustainable and viable. No matter how well designed or installed a system is, if there is no regular maintenance of the system, its longevity is compromised. A well designed, installed and maintained system will last for many years. The association has been working on the development and delivery of homeowner education for the past few years. The focus of this education is to promote proper design and installation through the services of a certified contractor and proper operation and maintenance of the system by the homeowner following installation.

This program will be marketed to the rural municipalities in Saskatchewan for implementation in 2015. Homeowner sessions are typically hosted by the municipality and held in the evening. Sessions generally run from 1 ½ to 2 hours in length.

More information on this program is available from the SOWMA office at 855-872-2650 (toll free) or 306-988-2102.

855-872-2650 tf