



What is an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) permit, and why do I need one?

Operations and Maintenance is a section of the sewage treatment system chapter of the Ohio Administrative Code that ensures proper maintenance of household sewage treatment systems through permitting and homeowner education. Obtaining an O&M permit for your household sewage treatment system, or more commonly known as a septic system, is required throughout the entire state of Ohio.

When did this program start?

The Ohio Department of Health first passed new statewide rules, including O&M, in 2015. The Clinton County Health District (CCHD) has steadily adopted and implemented portions of O&M incrementally since it passed. With the addition of permitting guidelines and existing system tracking in 2025, CCHD's O&M will be finalized.

Why is this important to me?

This program is crucial in helping you maintain your system's integrity while also preventing public health nuisances. Maintaining your system can help avoid costly repairs or even entire system replacements. New systems can be very expensive, with some costing more than \$20,000.

What does an O&M permit cost?

Currently, the CCHD is not charging for any type of O&M permit. Permit fees are subject to change based on program data and costs.

If I have an old septic system, do I need to replace it?

System replacements are only required for systems that are broken and/or causing a public health nuisance. If your system is not discharging sewage then it is likely you will not need a full replacement. Systems that are creating a public health nuisance may be repaired without full replacement depending on the severity of the system's damage.

Do O&M permits transfer ownership when I sell my house?

Yes, O&M permits are based on the address in which the system serves. Once ownership of a home is transferred, the new owner will be responsible for the renewal of the O&M permit.





Are there any new rules for my septic system?

All permitting guidelines will be stated on your new permit. Systems that make use of aeration, sand mounds, NPEDS permits, or any other highly mechanical feature must be renewed every 2 years. Systems that make use of pretreatment features, such as sand filters, must be renewed every 5 years. The most basic systems, with conventional tanks and leach fields, must be renewed every 10 years. Both CCHD and registered service providers can conduct inspections required for O&M permitting. A list of registered service providers is available at CCHD upon request.

When will I need to get an O&M permit?

All newly installed septic systems receive O&M permits automatically, while existing systems will receive a permit after the CCHD has completed any septic related inspections on your system (i.e. real estate evaluations, lot improvements, nuisances, etc.). You may also volunteer to be brought into the program, all you have to do is contact us. Each permit requires renewal, with frequency of time depending on the components of your system.

Does Clinton County have to conduct my O&M inspections?

While CCHD can provide base level O&M inspections, there are also service providers who can do inspections as well. You may seek a service contract with any number of service providers who are registered in Clinton County. Service providers typically have annual fees, but they also perform maintenance and inspect your system on an agreed upon basis. The inspections conducted under CCHD are to ensure your system is not creating a public health nuisance, whereas service providers can conduct more in depth inspections and recommend specific maintenance. Homeowners may also become O&M certified by the manufacturer of the system.

How can I get information on my current system or on O&M?

You can call, email, or visit our office to obtain a copy of your septic design. O&M can be found under the Ohio Administrative code chapter 3701-29-19.

