

*Use of International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical
Officials (IAPMO) Ps-1
Septic Tanks as Sumps*

PURPOSE

To establish a standard whereby septic tanks constructed under IAPMO standard PS-1 can be altered and be used as a sump tank.

GENERAL

The County of Sonoma has adopted an ordinance which requires that septic tanks installed in Sonoma County comply with the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO) standard PS-1. Currently, IAPMO has not establish standards or a listing for concrete sump containers, yet such sumps are an integral part of various private sewage disposal systems installed in Sonoma County.

The language found in Sonoma County Code Chapter 24 is quite specific in its intent to control “any septic tank...or container amenable for use as a septic tank, but used as a sump, water tank or other water-tight receptacle.” The purpose for applying the ordinance to any container is to prevent fraudulent manufacture of non-IAPMO approved septic tanks. It was not the intent to establish higher standards for sump tanks or other water-tight containers. However, in the absence of an IAPMO standard for sump tanks it is important the public be protected from the hazards associated with sump tanks constructed without proper measures to insure structural integrity.

Finding:

If a septic tank is built to IAPMO standard PS-1 and the baffle system is subsequently removed, the tank is no longer considered a septic tank and thus is not amenable to be used as a septic tank and thus not subject to IAPMO standard PS-1 as established by Sonoma County Code Chapter 24. However, such tanks retain their structural integrity and may be used as a sump tank.

AUTHORITY

Sonoma County Code Chapter 7
Sonoma County Code, Chapter 24

This policy supersedes Sonoma County Department of Health Services Administrative Order 90-2

PROCEDURE

1. A concrete container designed and built without a baffle system need not bear an IAPMO seal.
2. A concrete septic tank, that with baffle intact meets the standards of IAPMO standard PS-1, can be retrofitted by removal of the baffle and considered acceptable to be used as a sump but need not carry the designation of meeting IAPMO standard PS-1. Additionally, a concrete tank constructed to the standards contained in PS-1 in which the baffle is not installed may also be used as a sump tank.

Appeal from decisions made under this policy shall be first reviewed by the Well and Septic Section Supervisor with further consideration by the Division Manager for Field Operations and final appeal to the Director of PRMD.

Approved by:

Date posted 9/27/02

/s/ Richard L. Horner

Richard L. Holmer, Operations Manager

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