

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Ron DeSantis
Governor

Scott A. Rivkees, MD
State Surgeon General

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

Onsite Sewage and COVID-19 March 27, 2020

Background:

- Risk of transmission of COVID-19 from sewage or the feces of an infected person is expected to be low, based on outbreaks of similar viruses. As of the date of this guidance, there have not been any reports of fecal-oral transmission of COVID-19, and there is no evidence that the virus has been transmitted via sewerage systems, with or without disinfection.
- According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), when properly managed and sited, a septic system is expected to treat COVID-19 the same way it safely manages other viruses often found in wastewater.
- There are currently no recommended specific precautions for COVID-19 for employees involved in wastewater management.

Recommendations:

- Workers should use the same basic disease prevention practices that they should already be using to reduce health risks from other disease-causing organisms. Septic tank contractors can find more information about safe work practices at <https://www.fowaonsite.com/>.
- County health department staff are advised to practice [social distancing](#) (such as keeping six feet distance from other persons) in all work areas.

County Health Department Onsite Sewage Treatment, Disposal and System (OSTDS) Services:

- As of the date of this guidance, Department OSTDS staff will:
 - Provide on-demand services. These include:
 - Construction (i.e., system repairs, new, and modifications) site-evaluations, permits, inspections, and re-inspections;
 - operating or service permits (only initial inspections/pending inspections); and
 - complaint investigations.
 - Postpone routine inspections that are not on-demand services, such as annual inspections for operating permits and service permits.
- Local office or staff quarantines may impact services.

Note: This information on COVID-19 and wastewater is based on guidance developed by the [World Health Organization](#), the [Centers for Disease Control](#), [OSHA](#), [US EPA](#), the [Virginia Department of Health](#) and the [University of Minnesota Water Resources Center](#).

Florida Department of Health

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