MARION PUBLIC HEALTH
Healthy People, Healthy Places
181 S. Main St., Marion, OH 43302 | (740) 387-6520 | www.marionpublichealth.org

Frequently Asked Questions – Household Sewage Treatment Systems O&M Program

Q1: Why am I getting this letter?

A1: Our records show that your property has a septic system. Marion Public Health is required by the State of Ohio to make sure properties with septic systems are maintaining and operating their septic systems properly. Properly maintained septic systems help ensure our local waterways and environment are kept clean from septic waste.

Q2: Why do I have to pay $25 to renew my Operation and Maintenance permit?

A2: This covers Marion Public Health's administrative and field costs to ensure each resident with these systems are enrolled in the Operation & Maintenance (O&M) program and is keeping their systems properly maintained.

Q3: How often do I have to pay $25?

A3: For mechanical systems, such as septic tanks WITH aerators or drip systems, must renew their septic O&M permit every two years.

Non-mechanical systems, such as mounds and septic tanks WITHOUT an aerator, must renew their O&M permit every five years.

Q4: How do I pay my $25.00 permit fee?

A4: You can pay in person at our office (we accept cash, check or credit card), mail in your payment, or go to myhealthdepartment.com/marionpublichealth.

Q5: Why did O&M permit fees increase from $10 to $25?

A5: At the end of 2025, letters were sent to homeowners notifying them of the fee increase with the option to attend a public hearing. The fees were increased to $25.00 starting January 1, 2026. In addition to this change, the mechanical O&M permit renewal frequency was changed from yearly renewals to two-year renewals. This was to offset the cost increase for those properties that had to previously pay a renewal fee every year.

Q6: Why do I have to get a service contract for my septic system?

A6: Only systems with Mechanical O&M permits (NPDES, drip systems or septic tanks with aerators) must have a service contract as required by the Marion County Board of Health. This is because mechanical components such as aerators and UV lights provide additional treatment to the

wastewater before it leaves the tank, so these components MUST be maintained and operated properly to continue treating the waste.

Q7: How do I obtain a service contract?

A7: Please contact a Registered Septic Service Provider listed on our website. We can also email or mail you a copy of the service provider list or provide it to you in person at our office. Once you have a service contract, we will need a copy of it for our records.

Q8: How do I send you a copy of the service contract?

A8: You can either mail it, drop it off at our office, or email it to sewage@marionpublichealth.org.

Q9: How often do I have to get my tank pumped?

A9: It is recommended that your tank gets pumped every 5 years or more often as needed. The need to pump out your tank can be determined by your registered service provider or registered septage hauler when they come to your property to evaluate the system.

Q10: Who should I have pump my septic tank?

A10: Please contact a Registered Septic Hauler listed on our website. We can also email or mail you a copy of the hauler list or provide it to you in person at our office. Once the tank is pumped, we need a copy of the pumping report sent to us for our records. You can either mail it, drop it off at our office, or email it to sewage@marionpublichealth.org.

Q11: How often are you going to come to my property to inspect my septic system?

A11: Marion Public Health will only come out and inspect your septic system if we have received a complaint from a member of the community or a contractor regarding your septic system creating a public health nuisance, such as sewage surfacing on the ground or the septic system in failure. If you have a mechanical O&M permit, we may also come out to inspect your septic system if we have not received a copy of a service contract or service work during the time frame of the O&M permit.

Q12: Do my neighbors have to renew their O&M Permit too?

A12: We have approximately 700 properties enrolled in our O&M program, and we are adding properties every month. In 2015, the State of Ohio required local health departments to create an O&M program for properties with household septic systems. In Marion County, properties that had septic systems installed in 2015 and later have all been enrolled in our O&M program. We are slowly working to enroll septic systems into our program that were installed prior to 2015, but we estimate that there are thousands. With limited staffing, this has been a long process, but we are continuing to enroll these properties as time and resources allow, with specific priority given to systems creating a public health nuisance. We appreciate your patience in this matter.

Q13: What gives Marion Public Health the legal authority to require O&M permits?

A13: Ohio Revised Code Section 3718.02 (A)(7) requires the local board of health (in Marion County, this is Marion Public Health) to develop a program for the administration of maintenance

requirements of sewage treatment systems. Per Ohio Administrative Code 3701-29-09(I), “No person shall operate a STS [sewage treatment system]…without an approved and valid operation permit from the board of health.”

Further information regarding O&M policy requirements as mandated by the Ohio Administrative Code can be viewed in Rule 3701-29-19: STS operation and maintenance management, and system owner education.