

Regulation 61-82

Proper Closeout of Wastewater Treatment Facilities

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SC DEPARTMENT *of*
ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES

Statutory Authority:

1976 Code Sections 48-1-50, 48-6-10 et seq., and 2023 Act No. 60, effective July 1, 2024

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SECTION I: Definitions

The definition of any work or phrase employed in Sections II, III, IV and V shall be the same as given in the S.C. Pollution Control Act. The following words or phrases, which are not defined in said law, shall be defined as follows:

1. Lagoon—Lagoon shall mean a relatively small body of water contained in an earthen basin of controlled shape which is designed for treatment or handling wastewater.

2. Package Plant—Package plant shall include prefabricated factory assembled units and other modular type units designed for the treatment of wastewater through activated sludge processes and modifications thereof. Although not generally considered a package plant, for the purpose of this Regulation, Imhoff tanks shall be considered a package plant.

3. Closeout—Closeout shall mean the cessation of waste treatment facility operations in accordance with the appropriate sections of this Regulation.

4. Abandonment—Abandonment shall mean the cessation of daily visits to the waste treatment facility by the certified operator in charge for the purpose of insuring proper operation and maintenance of a waste treatment facility.

5. “Should” and “Shall”—Should is permissive and shall is mandatory.

6. Department—Department means the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services.

SECTION II: Proper closeout of lagoons

1. Lagoons shall be drained only after written permission has been obtained from the Department and in accordance with one of the below procedures, (procedures in order of decreasing desirability):

a. Sewage from the lagoon may be pumped into the treatment facility or receiving system replacing the lagoon, provided that the rate is such that hydraulic and/or organic overloading and surging of the replacement system is prevented and provided that permission is obtained from the owner of the replacement system; or

b. If the above method is not possible, the lagoon may be drained into the receiving stream at a rate not exceeding the maximum design flow of the lagoon, provided that before draining, the lagoon is allowed to stabilize without additional inflowing sewage for a period not less than the design retention time of the lagoon.

c. If neither of the above methods is possible, an alternative method of closeout may be proposed for Department consideration.

2. In each of the above alternatives, the lagoon shall be drained from the surface of the lagoon to prevent accumulated solids on the bottom of the lagoon from being carried out of the lagoon.

3. After the treated sewage has been drained from the lagoon, solid accumulation on the bottom of the lagoon shall be allowed to dry. A disinfectant suitable for control of odors and vectors shall be applied to all remaining solids when determined necessary by the Department. After drying, the solids should be mixed with soil and left on the bottom of the lagoon, be removed for disposal in an approved landfill, or disposed in some other approved method.

4. The lagoon may be filled with soil or may be allowed to remain bowlshaped, so as to be utilized for purposes other than waste handling, i.e., fish ponds, irrigation ponds, etc., provided that this practice does not violate local health and vector control regulations and Department approval of the close-out is obtained prior to any alternative use of the facility.

SECTION III: Proper closeout of package plants

Package plants shall be drained in accordance with one of the following procedures:

a. Sewage may be pumped into the treatment facility or receiving system replacing the package plant, provided that the rate is such that overloading of the replacement system is prevented and provided that permission is obtained from the owner of the replacement system; or

b. Sewage may be pumped into portable tanks for transfer and disposal in a sewer system, provided that permission is obtained from the owner of the receiving system.

SECTION IV: Proper closeout of waste treatment facilities not defined as lagoons and package plants

Waste treatment facilities not defined as lagoons and package plants shall be closed out in accordance with guidelines issued by the Department on an individual basis. These guidelines shall be designed to prevent health hazards and to promote safety in and around the abandoned sites.

SECTION V: Procedures applicable to all closeouts

1. A request for site inspection for closeout shall be made by the responsible official to the Department.
2. A site inspection shall be conducted by the Department and authorization to proceed with closeout granted by the Department.
3. Monitoring as deemed necessary by the Department to prevent water quality violations or nuisance conditions will be established on a case-by-case basis and carried out in accordance with Department guidance.
4. Upon completion of closeout the responsible party shall request an inspection by the Department. The results of the inspection shall be reduced to writing and forwarded to the responsible official approving or disapproving the closeout. In cases of disapproval discrepancies shall be noted and a follow-up inspection scheduled.
5. Closeout will be considered accomplished only after approval in writing from the Department.
6. Areas around all waste treatment facilities undergoing closeout shall remain secured until closeout has been accomplished. In an instance of package plant closeout, the plant shall remain secured until electrical power has been disconnected and the plant is removed from the premises and depressions resulting from the removal of the system filled.

SECTION VI: Penalties

Any person determined to be in violation of the procedures outlined in this Regulation or found to have abandoned a waste treatment facility without initiating and completing approved closeout of the waste

treatment facility shall be subject to civil and criminal penalties prescribed in Section 48-1-320 and 48-1-330 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976.