

# Bylaw 3479 – Type 2 & 3

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Capital Regional District | November 2021

### 1. What are the issues around malfunctioning septic systems?

When septic systems malfunction, untreated or partially treated wastewater can be exposed. Untreated wastewater carries dangerous viruses and pathogens that can result in illness and pollution in our community. Malfunctioning septic systems cause contamination of groundwater and local streams, rivers and lakes, as well as contamination of shellfish beds and nutrient enrichment of sensitive water bodies. A homeowner may be unaware that their system is malfunctioning.

The Capital Regional District (CRD), in cooperation with participating municipalities, implemented Bylaw No. 3479 in response to the provincial government Sewerage System Regulations. This bylaw ensures regular maintenance of our region's systems which will help to prevent the public health risks and environmental degradation associated with poorly maintained onsite septic systems.

### 2. What are Bylaw No. 3479 requirements?

The bylaw requires property owners in the municipalities of Colwood, Langford, Saanich and View Royal with Type 2 and 3 systems to maintain their system according to the maintenance plan for the system, and ensure it is maintained by an Authorized Person at least once per calendar year. A Certification of Maintenance form must be completed by an Authorized Person and sent in to the CRD annually. A copy of this form must also be retained by owners and be available to the CRD upon request.

### 3. What is the difference between Types 1, 2 and 3 septic systems?

Under the Provincial Sewerage System Regulation, septic systems are divided into Types 1, 2 and 3. Type 1 is treatment by septic tank and drainfield. Waste may be gravity fed or pumped into the drainfield. Type 2 and Type 3 systems introduce further treatment in order to produce a higher quality effluent that can be discharged into a smaller sized drainfield. Type 2 and Type 3 systems are often used where there are site or soil constraints that prevent a Type 1 from being used. These systems often use a package treatment plant and they have mechanical or media components that require more frequent maintenance than Type 1 systems.

### 4. What is a Certification of Maintenance Form?

A Certification of Maintenance form is a CRD form used to document the annual maintenance of your onsite sewage system under Bylaw No. 3479. Owners must ensure an Authorized Person completes this form annually, to be sent into the CRD. As well, owners should keep a copy for their records, it may be requested by the CRD if not submitted by their service provider.

### 5. Who can do work on a septic system?

The Provincial Sewerage System Regulation allows only *Authorized Persons* to design, plan, construct or do maintenance work on an onsite sewage system in BC. An Authorized Person is defined as a Professional Engineer or Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioner (ROWP) with education or experience in onsite sewage system construction and maintenance.

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The Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC (ASTTBC) is the provincial registering body for Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioners (ROWPs). To find a qualified ROWP in your area, contact a local septic company and ask for their ROWP maintenance Provider or contact the Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC at [techinfo@asttbc.org](mailto:techinfo@asttbc.org) or 604.585.2788

The Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC (APEGBC) maintains a list of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists undertaking services as Professionals under the Regulation. Under the Regulation, construction or maintenance of a Type 3 system must be under the supervision of a Professional. A list of Professionals can be found online at: <https://www.egbc.ca/Member-Directories/Professionals-for-Sewerage-System-Regulation>

### 6. How can I save money on annual maintenance?

Many registered practitioners provide maintenance and monitoring at a reduced cost if your septic system is under a maintenance contract. If you contract a maintenance provider to maintain your system once or twice a year, this may require an initial visit at a higher cost (in order for them to fully examine the condition of the septic system and determine what maintenance is required) but they will become familiar with your system and be able to maintain it more cost effectively in the long term according to a maintenance plan.

### 7. What are the costs of septic maintenance?

The current (2020) industry costs on Vancouver Island are estimated to be as follows:

Pumping a septic tank:	\$400 - \$1200 (600 – 1000 gallon tank)
Inspection:	\$600 - \$1200
Maintenance, cleaning or repairs:	\$90-110 per hour

### 8. More Information?

To contact the CRD regarding septic systems, call 250-360-3187, email [septic@crd.bc.ca](mailto:septic@crd.bc.ca) or visit [www.crd.bc.ca/septic](http://www.crd.bc.ca/septic)

To report a malfunctioning septic system or for installation plans and drawings contact Island Health (VIHA) at 250-519-3401 or email [gateway\\_office@islandhealth.ca](mailto:gateway_office@islandhealth.ca)