



## SEPTIC TANK DESTRUCTION GUIDANCE

### San Diego County Regulatory Code 68.325, LAMP 3.8.6

This guidance is intended to provide the procedures to properly destroy a septic tank when leaving it in place. An alternative to destroying a septic tank in place is to destroy by complete removal and disposal. This is recommended if the area is to be used as a future building site, is needed for utility trenches, or for other development purposes. Check with the Building Division if the area is to be used for a future foundation, concrete slab, pier/post or other structural feature. Special provisions may be required to ensure the integrity of future structures.

An abandoned septic tank must be destroyed under a permit from the Department of Environmental Health and Quality (DEHQ). A septic tank, lined seepage pit (not rock-filled), holding tank or other sanitation facilities that are in a state of disrepair, are no longer watertight, or that have been disconnected from a drainage system or otherwise taken out of use for a period of 30 days or more shall be deemed abandoned and must be destroyed under permit. Cesspools are prohibited and must also be destroyed under permit.

#### PROCEDURE: Septic or Other Tank:

1. Obtain a permit from DEHQ. Complete the permit application [Septic Repair Authorization](#) and submit to DEHQ with associated fee. Do not start work until a permit has been issued.
2. Remove all sewage from the septic tank using a sewage pumping company with a valid registration from DEHQ. Retain a copy of the pumping receipt for review at time of inspection.
3. Remove and dispose of the cover of the septic tank or break it into pieces and collapse within the tank. All unsafe openings shall be kept secured at all times.
4. Fill the tank with clean dirt, sand, pea gravel, or other approved material up to but not over the top of the vertical portions of the tank sidewalls or above the level of the outlet pipe.
5. Call inspection line (see below) at least 48-hours in advance to schedule an inspection. Do not proceed until an inspection has been completed by DEHQ.
6. After inspection, fill the remaining area to ground surface with clean dirt other approved material.

#### PROCEDURE: Open or Lined Seepage Pit:

1. Remove cover and fill open void of seepage pit with approved material up to but not over the level of the inlet pipe. The material to be used is dependent on many factors, including the seepage pit dimensions/condition, site conditions, and future use of the area. Some factors for destruction include safety (open pit), conduit for contamination (pit can allow contamination to migrate to groundwater), and soil/structural integrity (ensuring filled pit will not collapse or affect future development). Some conditions may require engineered specifications, especially if the seepage pit is to be built over. Examples of potential materials include septic rock, clean dirt fill, and bentonite or sand/cement slurries.
2. Call inspection line (see below) at least 48-hours in advance to schedule an inspection. Do not proceed until an inspection has been completed by DEHQ.
3. After inspection, the remaining area of the seepage pit shall be filled to ground surface level with clean dirt, sand or other approved material.

#### DEHQ CONTACT INFORMATION:

County Operations Center  
[5500 Overland Avenue, San Diego, CA 92123](#)



[\(858\) 565-5173](tel:(858)565-5173) (Duty Desk)



[\(858\) 694-2553](tel:(858)694-2553) (Septic Inspection Line)



[LWQDduty@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:LWQDduty@sdcounty.ca.gov)