Purpose

To establish a policy for location of future small wastewater treatment facilities.

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, a small wastewater treatment facility is any facility with a capacity of up to 2,000 equivalent dwelling units or approximately 0.48 million gallons per day.

Background

General Plan Guiding Principle 2: Promote health and sustainability by locating new growth near existing and planned infrastructure, service, and jobs in a compact pattern of development.

General Plan Policy LU 14.4:

Sewer Facilities. Prohibit sewer facilities that would induce unplanned growth. Require sewer systems to be planned, developed and sized to serve the land use pattern and densities depicted on the Land Use Map. Sewer systems and services shall not be extended beyond either Village boundaries or extant Urban Limit Lines, whichever is more restrictive, except:

- when necessary for public health, safety or welfare;
- when within existing sewer district boundaries;
- when necessary for a conservation subdivision adjacent to existing sewer facilities; or
- where specifically allowed in the community plan.

An Urban Limit Line is a growth boundary that can be used in Community Plans to define the maximum extent of urban and suburban development. An Urban Limit Line may be the basis for containment of growth inducing urban infrastructure or community-specific goals and policies.

It is the intent of the Land Use Element to limit extension of urban services into the Semi- Rural and Rural Areas of the County.

In order to assure that growth and facilities are properly phased with each other in a manner consistent with regional objectives, the General Plan identifies locations within the unincorporated area that are within the Village boundaries or Urban Limit Line.

Due to capacity constraints and restrictions of existing treatment facilities, requests for localized or small wastewater treatment facilities are sometimes made for certain development proposals. These small facilities were not anticipated to be used for isolated pockets of development in the Semi Rural and Rural Development land use categories in the County. Small facilities properly

planned and designed can provide adequate wastewater treatment and, where possible, water reclamation while reducing demands on coastal sewage treatment and disposal facilities.

If such facilities are not properly planned and designed, they can disrupt the Semi-Rural and Rural Development land use categories, promote other urban services, and reduce the viability of subregional facilities by fragmenting the effluent generation sources.

Policy

It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors that:

Construction of small wastewater treatment facilities will be subject to all appropriate plans, ordinances, statutes and regulations including but not limited to:

- County General Plan and adopted population forecasts.
- County Zoning Ordinance including Section 7362 (Major Use Permits).
- California Environmental Quality Act and County EIR Guidelines.
- The rules and regulations of the Regional Water Quality Control Board and all other affected regulatory agencies.
- The Land Use Element of the County General Plan.

Prior to approving a small wastewater treatment facility, one of the following findings shall be made in addition to the findings required in the Land Use Element:

1. All projects should be located within the Village boundaries or Urban Limit Line or within one mile of the Urban Limit Line; except that where a Specific Plan has been approved prior to August 12, 1987, and said Specific Plan specifies such facilities, subsequent applications to implement or amend the Specific Plan shall not be subject to this finding; or

2. In the Semi-Rural and Rural Development Areas where a facility is approved, annexation and hookup to a traditional sewer system shall be prohibited until a Village boundary or urban limit line is extended.

The Board of Supervisors delegates to the San Diego County Planning Commission the authority to waive the locational criteria in paragraph 1 above, if the Planning Commission determines that

in the particular case it would not be in the public interest to follow the policy and the following conditions are met:

a. The proposed facility is located within the geographic boundaries of the two Village Areas as shown on the Valley Center Community Plan Map (adopted by the Board of Supervisors August, 2011);

b. The proposed facility is a community based, multi-user facility that will make sewer service available on a voluntary basis to commercial, industrial, residential, and civic/public uses. Capital costs of the proposed facility will be shared by those designated to receive sewer service; and

c. The proposed facility will be operated by a public agency authorized to provide sewer service.

A decision by the Planning Commission denying a waiver request may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors by filing a written appeal either at the Department of Planning & Development Services or at the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors within ten days following the decision.

Note: This policy does not apply to single owner-single user on-site wastewater treatment systems permitted by the Department of Environmental Health. On-site wastewater treatment system siting and design standards are established pursuant to a Local Agency Management Program approved by the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Sunset Date

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-26

Board Action
12-19-79 (25)
12-11-84 (18)
08-12-87 (11)
07-26-88 (43)
12-12-89 (49)
05-22-90 (80)
03-13-91 (2)
11-17-99 (3)
06-23-04 (12)
12-09-08 (33)
10-31-12 (4)
11-20-19 (10)

CAO Reference

1. Department of Planning & Development Services
2. Department of Public Works
3. Department of Environmental Health