

Water

Single-Family Residence Wastewater Irrigation Systems (Wastewater Treatment)

What Activities Require These Permits? Single-Family Residence (SFR) wastewater treatment and irrigation systems are for residential lots serving no more than one residence. The wastewater treatment portion of the system typically consists of: a baffled septic tank with effluent filter; a filtration system that is either gravity or pump-fed and utilizes sand or other approved media; disinfection by either tablet chlorination or ultraviolet (UV) irradiation; and pump/storage tanks with audible and visual alarms. The treated wastewater is then irrigated on the residence's property using either spray heads or drip irrigation tubing. SFR permits may only be issued to the current property owner, and only if the site has been denied by the county health department for a subsurface system.

What Is The Purpose of These Permits? Application of treated residential wastewater through this permit is intended to provide a wastewater disposal option to a single-family residence allowing development on property that is not suited for subsurface or traditional wastewater disposal systems (e.g. septic tanks and drain fields).

Who Issues These Permits? N.C. Division of Water Resources, Water Quality Permitting Section / Non-Discharge Branch.

How Much Will These Permits Cost? A full list of current permitting fees can be found at the following link:
<https://www.deq.nc.gov/accessdeq/permit-fees-2025-updates>

What Are My Payment Options for Permit Application Fees? Check, Money Order, or Electronic Transfer.

If Paying by Check, Who do I Make the Check Payable to and Where Do I Send the Check? Made payable to the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) and sent to NC Division of Water Resources, Water Quality Permitting Section / Non-Discharge Branch, 1617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1617.

Where Can I Get The Application For These Permits? <http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/water-resources-permits/wastewater-branch/non-discharge-permitting-unit/application>.

How Long Will It Take To Review My Application? The statutory review time is 90 days from receipt of a complete application. If the application is not complete, an additional information letter shall advise the applicant how the application may be modified to make it complete. If all required information is not submitted within 30 days, the application will be returned as incomplete.

Where Do I Submit My Application? Permit applications are submitted electronically using the Electronic Application and Document Upload form (<https://edocs.deq.nc.gov/Forms/NonDischarge-Branch-Submittal-Form-Ver2>), or by email to Non-Discharge.Reports@ncdenr.gov (for applications smaller than 20 MB).

How Long Is My Permit or License or Certificate Valid? A Single-Family Residence Wastewater Irrigation System permit remains valid up to eight years. Permit renewals are submitted 180 days prior to expiration.

Notes/Comments: New SFR systems require soils reports from licensed soils scientists and designs by licensed professional engineers. Please consult an experienced licensed professional to see if an irrigation system will work for a particular project.

Legal Authority/Statute Reference: 15A NCAC 02T .0600

Link: <http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/water-resources-permits/wastewater-branch/non-discharge-permitting>

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Statewide Contact Information:

NC Division of Water Resources
Water Quality Permitting Section / Non-Discharge Branch
1617 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1617
Telephone: (919) 707-3654