



Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Rachel Carson State Office Building

P.O. Box 8774

Harrisburg, PA 17105-8774

October 10, 2003

**Bureau of Water Supply
and Wastewater Management**

717-787-8184

To All Sewage Enforcement Officers:

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of several new and exciting developments in the Sewage Facilities Program at the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

First, the new Alternate System Guidance (ASG) manual achieved "final" status on September 20, 2003. This final version of the publication is available online and a personal copy may be downloaded from the DEP website. While there are several different sequences available to navigate the DEP website to the ASG document location, you may find it most convenient to do so through the links set up on the Wastewater Management pages. Wastewater Management is the location of almost all sewage disposal related material available from DEP. To access the Wastewater Management Section of the DEP website first use www.dep.state.pa.us, then search with DEP Keyword "Wastewater" (consider adding a "bookmark" or "favorite" for this page because of all the other useful information available there). Specifically, the new ASG is found on the "Sewage and Sewage Disposal" page within the "Onlot Sewage Disposal" section.

In addition to individual technology descriptions, the new ASG contains a provision for DEP to delegate (on an interim basis) design review authority to Sewage Enforcement Officers (SEOs). Delegation of alternate system review authority is provided in Pa Code, Title 25, Chapter 72, Section 72.43(l). Prior to this new option, completion of DEP sponsored training (online or classroom) was the only means for an individual SEO to achieve delegation of this authority. However, since formal training is not yet available for all technologies found in the ASG and many experienced SEOs desire this additional professional responsibility, an interim method of delegation has been developed. Interim delegation to an individual SEO is (1) for a specific technology, (2) based on demonstrated knowledge of that technology, (3) recommended by the appropriate DEP regional office, and (4) issued by DEP's Division of Wastewater Management. Award of interim delegation does not relieve an SEO from an obligation to complete formal training when it becomes available. If interested in being considered for interim review delegation, contact your local DEP office.

Another initiative currently underway at DEP is the production of a technical guidance document designed to assist SEOs considering corrective measures for malfunctioning sewage disposal systems. Technical Guidance number 362-2208-002 (which is currently in draft) is titled "Technical Decision Making And The Use Of Conventional Technology, Alternate Technology, Experimental Technology and Best Sewage Enforcement Officers, Technical Guidance (BTG) In Onlot Sewage System Repair Situations." The draft technical guidance blends information and principals taken from DEP

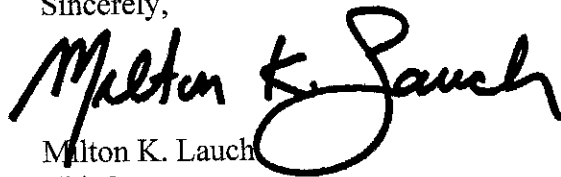


October 10, 2003

Regulations, Sections 73.3(b) & (c) on policy, 72.33(a) & (b) on well isolation distance exemptions, 73.71 on Experimental Sewage systems, and 73.72 on Alternate Sewage Systems into a user-friendly, suggested decision process referred to as "technical decision making." This document is available for public comment until October 28, 2003 in the Draft Technical Guidance section of the "Participate!" area of the DEP website and will continue thereafter until it becomes final guidance. Please take a few moments to review the document and let us know your thoughts.

Our current intentions are to have this be the first in a series of general letters that bring attention to new developments to revisit old issues in the Sewage Facilities Program at DEP. Funding and staff limitations may subsequently impact this initiative but, in any event, look for future letters as events and circumstances permit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Milton K. Lauch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "L" at the end.

Milton K. Lauch
Chief

Division of Wastewater Management