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**Bureau of Water Supply
and Wastewater Management**

To All Sewage Enforcement Officers:

This letter will discuss inspection fees for complaint investigations, site suitability soil testing notification, the new technology verification program, and an update to the AdvanTex technology field-testing project.

Inspection Fees for Complaint Investigations: We had an interesting query recently regarding the propriety of a local agency charging a fee for complaint investigations. It was reported to us that an SEO was advising a complainant that no inspection or investigation would be made in response to a complaint unless the complainant paid a fee in advance. Apparently the local agency initiated this practice in an effort to curtail nuisance complaints, such as the ones that classically arise during neighborhood disagreements. In any event, DEP regulatory counsel has advised us that the imposition of such a fee is not sanctioned by the Sewage Facilities Act and is not one of the powers and duties granted to municipalities by the legislature.

Soil Testing Notification: This once common practice has been on the decline recently in several areas of the state. All SEOs are reminded to notify the planning approval agency (DEP or Delegated Agency) of scheduled site suitability soil testing at least 10 days prior to the event. Notification requirements are not limited to specific project size but may vary with individual offices due to available staff resources. Notification may be either by telephone or in writing. This required notification affords agency staff an opportunity to observe the testing and affords the SEO an opportunity to discuss the site conditions in the field with the agency.

Experimental Onlot Technology Guidance Finalized: The final *Experimental Onlot Wastewater Technology Verification Program Guidance* (DEP ID: 381-2208-001), or simply TVP, was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on Saturday, July 3, 2004. The guidance establishes a process for independent third party verification of the performance of experimental onlot technologies. Technology performance is verified through controlled test center testing followed by representative field-testing throughout Pennsylvania. A copy of the guidance is available on DEP's website at www.dep.state.pa.us, use Keyword "DEP Wastewater," select "Sewage and Sewage Disposal," and then "OLDS." Contact the Division of Municipal Financial Assistance at 717-787-3481 for additional information.

At the same time the TVP was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*, the *Experimental Systems Guidance* (ESG) (DEP ID: 362-0300-008) was rescinded. Proponents of the proprietary technologies listed in the ESG have been notified of the transition to the TVP, and informed that the future status of their technology will be based on an evaluation of all data and information from systems installed and



monitored while listed in the ESG. Technologies determined to have successfully completed testing under the ESG will be included in the *Alternate Systems Guidance* (DEP ID: 362-0300-007), and those determined unsuccessful will not be available for further use.

SEOs considering the use or permitting of experimental technology are reminded of the regulatory requirement of Title 25 Pa. Code, Chapter 73, Section 73.71 (b) to submit preliminary design plans and specifications to DEP for review and comment. DEP will determine if a classification as an experimental system, method, technology or design is appropriate and will provide comments to the SEO.

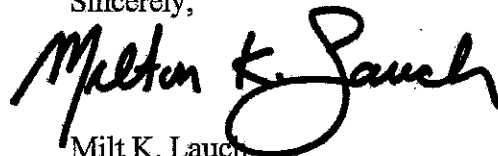
Update on Field-Testing of the AdvanTex® AX20 Onlot Treatment System: The search for test sites to verify the performance of this experimental technology is continuing. A sufficient number of sites have been located in the Southcentral and Southeast DEP Regions, but additional sites in other parts of the state are still needed. Suitable sites should have at least 250 mg/L of alkalinity in the influent wastewater to support nitrification of ammonia. Additionally, water softener backwash to the treatment system is not allowed. For the purpose of this experiment, disposal in an at-grade bed on soils with a vertical isolation distance of at least 10 inches to the seasonal high water table and 16 inches to rock formation, or use as a small flow treatment facility will be considered. Use of the technology for repair situations is preferred.

The AdvanTex® AX20 unit is an attached growth, multiple pass, packed bed filter that uses textile media. The unit has been certified by the National Sanitation Foundation International (NSF) under NSF/ANSI Standard 40, and is currently being field tested under the National Demonstration Program at La Pine, Oregon. More information on the La Pine project is available online at <http://marx.deschutes.org/deq/ax-20.htm>.

Orenco is offering a \$2,000 discount on the cost of the technology to all those selected to participate in the field performance verification. For further information, e-mail Tom Franklin with DEP's Innovative Technology Section at thfranklin@state.pa.us or call 717-787-3481.

My staff is already busy working on the next letter. It will expand on onlot-permit definitions and application form changes mentioned in my June 4, 2004, letter and discusses some impending changes to the annual reimbursement application that may impact how you track your permitting data. Expect to see the next letter in early September.

Sincerely,



Milt K. Lauch

Chief

Division of Wastewater Management

bcc: 30-day
Code 20.6.7
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