

603. Discovery of Improperly-Abandoned Septic Tanks at Clearwater Harbor

Purpose

The following policy has been adopted by the Clearwater River Watershed District (CRWD) Board of Managers to clearly define how the discovery of old septic tanks on parcels served by the Clearwater Harbor Sanitary Sewer System (hereafter “Sewer”) will be handled.

Background

When the Sewer was constructed in the 2000s, existing septic tanks that were in service were to be disconnected and properly abandoned of per state standards. Since that time, there has been at least one instance where an improperly-abandoned septic tank has been discovered on a parcel serviced by the Sewer.

Standard 1: The CRWD recognizes improperly abandoned septic tanks to be both a public health hazard and a potential detriment to water quality.

Standard 2: Upon discovery of what is believed to be an improperly-abandoned septic tank, the CRWD will work with the parcel owner to determine if the discovered tank is indeed improperly abandoned. The parcel owner will be required to agree to cover all costs associated with this determination should it be found the tank has been properly abandoned.

Standard 3: If it is found the discovered tank is improperly abandoned, the CRWD will determine if it was aware of the in-question tank’s existence during construction of the sewer.

- If the CRWD finds evidence it was aware of the tank’s existence during Sewer construction, and as such the construction contractor for the Sewer should have abandoned the tank, the CRWD will cover the costs to properly abandon the tank and will work with the parcel owner to facilitate proper abandonment.
- If the CRWD finds no evidence it was aware of the tank’s existence during Sewer construction, it will work with the parcel owner to facilitate proper abandonment. Cost share is available on a 50/50 basis, up to \$2,000 per tank from the operation & maintenance fund for the Sewer to facilitate this action.

Standard 4: If CRWD cost-share is used to facilitate proper abandonment of a septic tank, the CRWD will handle the acquisition of a contractor to complete the abandonment.