

## Advanced Septic Costs and Concerns

### **Estimated Costs are:**

Costs range from \$20,000 to \$25,000 – This does not typically include the cost of removal of the old tank, the replacement of a drain field if necessary, home wiring improvements to meet code and landscape remediation.

Life span of an advanced electro/mechanical septic is estimated at 10 years versus the 20+ years present conventional tanks last.<sup>1</sup> Sewers are rated with a life span of greater than 20 year since PVC piping can last up to 100 years.

Miscellaneous costs do not include FDOH required annual permit renewals, maintenance contracts or electrical costs. These are estimated to be an additional \$2,000 annually.

Conclusion on costs: Over a 20-year lifespan, costs for an advanced septic system will be \$40,000 for two advanced systems, and \$40,000 for miscellaneous costs – In excess of \$80,000

### **Concerns with Advanced Septic Systems are:**

“DOSING RESTRICTIONS” – Dosing is a fixed maximum volume of daily water processing. Events like large gatherings, house guests, or an unusually heavy laundry day can cause systems to malfunction, trigger alarms and require service calls. Vacations, when there is no use for weeks, can cause solids in the systems to harden and stop working.

“BIO-FILTERS” - Bacteria is often used to treat and remove nitrogen. Antibacterial soaps Clorox, grease, garbage disposal contents, some prescription drugs, and even chemotherapy drugs eliminated in the waste of cancer patients will shut down these “high performance” systems and void warranties.

“COMPLEXITY” - Mechanical and operational risks are numerous. Multiple pumps, relays, alarms, floats, circuit boards, filters, valves, check valves, fans, etc. all need regular maintenance and periodic replacement. Toilets cannot be used while waiting for repairs.

“ELECTRIC POWER” – The requirement of constant 24 X 7 electrical power makes advanced septic systems a poor choice in areas that receive weather related power outages. Systems cannot be used without power. To do so generally will void a warranty. After long shutdowns, systems must be restarted by a technician.

“NUISANCES” – When entire neighborhoods are converted to advanced septic systems, there is a risk of both odor and noise. Unlike sewers that are vented at roof levels, advanced septic systems are vented at ground level.

“HOME VALUES” – While no detailed study has been done, the evidence to date is that when an advanced septic system is installed into a home, its value drops in comparison to equivalent homes on sewers. Homes are also more difficult to sell.

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<sup>1</sup> Damann Anderson Ran 5 Mil Study – Page 20-#5 “Costs did not include the expected replacement at 10 years due to the obsolescence factor that comes with complex -electro-mechanical devices.”