

## ONSITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS *POST FIRE INFORMATION*

### CHECKING FOR ONSITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM (OWTS) DAMAGE

Most of the components of an OWTS are located below ground and typically more resistant to fire damage. Damage to an OWTS may have occurred due to high heat, exposure to flames, smoke, ash, and power outages or equipment failure. Treatment unit pods, electrical panels and drip dispersal type systems are the most vulnerable. Heavy fire-fighting equipment and heat from fires may also damage underground OWTS components such as fiberglass tanks, piping and old system components. In addition, fire materials may have contaminated the contents of tanks and the liquid. Waste may need to be pumped out.

A City Registered OWTS Practitioner must inspect the OWTS for signs of damage and functionality of the system and submit an assessment form prior to utilization of the system. Any repairs to the OWTS must be made prior to utilization of the system. A list of practitioners may be obtained on our website at <http://malibucity.org/practitioners>.

#### **Signs of damage may include:**

- Melted lids (riser and/or tank). Take measures to protect from collapse if necessary
- Melted plastic piping above or below ground
- Below ground components of system, such as disinfection unit, pumps, and electrical may be melted
- Evidence of vehicle traffic, such as firetruck, in the area of the OWTS
- Raised components of the system are in direct line of fire, i.e. vegetation is scorched
- Damage in the area where pipes enter the structure
- Interruption of power to OWTS components

### REQUIREMENTS FOR OWTS WHEN REBUILDING

When rebuilding a home or structure destroyed by a fire, the existing onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) may be utilized with approval by the City. An inspection of the OWTS must be conducted by a City Registered OWTS Practitioner. The inspection report and fire damage assessment form must be submitted to the Environmental Health office for evaluation.

## 1. TEMPORARY HOMES

- Utilizing an existing OWTS  
To determine if the OWTS is operational, obtain an inspection of the OWTS by a City Registered OWTS Practitioner. A list of practitioners may be obtained on our website at <http://malibucity.org/practitioners>. Submit the inspection report to Environmental Health for evaluation. Any repairs/replacement must be made prior to utilization of the OWTS.
- Installation of a new OWTS  
The appropriate planning permit must be obtained for a new OWTS.

## 2. REPLACEMENT STRUCTURES:

meeting planning criteria for exemption from coastal development permit

- Utilizing an existing OWTS  
To determine if the OWTS is operational, obtain an inspection of the OWTS by a City Registered OWTS Practitioner. A list of practitioners may be obtained on our website at <http://malibucity.org/practitioners>. Submit the inspection report to Environmental Health for evaluation. Any repairs/replacement must be made prior to utilization of the OWTS.
- Installation of a new OWTS  
The appropriate planning permit must be obtained for a new OWTS.

## 3. REPLACEMENT STRUCTURES: not meeting planning criteria, for exemption i.e. expansion of footprint, additional bedrooms or plumbing fixtures

- Installation of a new OWTS  
The appropriate planning permit must be obtained for a new OWTS.

## ABANDONMENT OF OWTS

If the property will be cleared and not rebuilt, the OWTS must be abandoned. An abandonment permit must be obtained from Building Safety Department.

**PLEASE CONTACT THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH STAFF IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS**