

**STATE OF NEW MEXICO**  
**ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**  
**FIELD OPERATIONS DIVISION**

**LIQUID WASTE PROGRAM**

**GUIDANCE NUMBER 15:** Issuance of a certificate of registration of an unpermitted system with a single compartment septic tank.

**I. PURPOSE:**

This guidance describes what documentation is to be required for approval and issuance of a certificate of registration for continued operation for liquid waste systems with a single compartment septic tank.

**II. APPLICABILITY:**

This guidance applies to the issuance of a certificate of registration for continued operation for liquid waste systems previously not permitted, **constructed before 1976**, functioning properly and with a single compartment septic tank.

**III. GENERAL:**

The 1976 Uniform Plumbing Code included a requirement for two-chamber septic tanks. This was the first UPC that included this requirement. In September 1959, the New Mexico Health and Social Services Department Policy for Individual Water Supplies and Sewage Disposal did not mention a requirement for two-compartment tanks. The NMED liquid waste disposal regulations were silent on construction requirements until the 1997 regulations.

**IV. GUIDANCE STATEMENT:**

If the system was installed on or after January 1, 1976, or if no proof of the installation date is available, a two-chamber tank is required. Registration of unpermitted liquid waste systems require that they comply with the regulations that were in effect at the time they were constructed (See Guidance 8). Therefore, unpermitted systems may be issued a certificate of registration for continued operation if the other regulations in effect at the time of installation are met. Therefore, proof of the date of installation of the system prior to 1976, must be provided to the Department in the form of:

Proof of the existence of a house (as a surrogate for the existence of the septic system);

Utility bills;

Documentation from the assessor's office, which indicates when the house was built or existing;

Receipts for the installation of the septic tank or purchase of the septic tank; or other acceptable documentation.

V. **APPROVAL:**

Approved by FOD Director *Ana Marie Del*

VI. **EFFECTIVE DATE: March 7, 2006**