



**MEMORANDUM**

August 14, 2017

To: Wastewater Advisory Council (WAC)  
From: Duncan Welch, P.E., Director, Division of On-site Wastewater  
RE: Overview of Privatization Costs and Practices

As was requested in WAC meeting on May 17, 2017, the Division of On-site Wastewater has conducted an overview of the costs associated with the privatization of on-site wastewater disposal system design. The Division has also conducted a survey of surrounding states (Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas, Georgia, and Florida) to find their practices as they relate to site evaluation and on-site wastewater disposal system design.

In evaluating potential costs to the consumer, the Division canvassed several Professional Engineers and Environmentalists as to what they would charge should the Division discontinue the practice of providing on-site wastewater disposal system design to the general public. Environmentalists costs ranged from \$500 to \$1000 to provide system design and installation inspection. Professional Engineers costs ranged from \$1000 to \$2500 for these services. Responses varied as to whether or not application fees to the Division were included in those fees. Generally speaking, fees payable to the Division were not part of these fees. Should the site evaluation process be changed in this manner, the Division would still charge some yet to be determined review fee for site evaluation, once a system design is received. For the purposes of this memorandum, the \$100 fee set by statute for soil/site evaluation is used. The Division currently charges \$100 for on-site wastewater system design and \$97.50 for installation inspection and approval. However, these fees do not fully cover the costs of the Division performing these tasks. At present, the Division is partially supported by a general fund appropriation which offsets the previously mentioned shortfall. Please see the below table for a breakdown of consumer costs:

<b>Price Range</b>	<b>Site Design &amp; Evaluation</b>	<b>Installation Approval</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
Current	\$100	\$97.50	\$197.50
Low	\$500 + \$100	\$97.50	\$697.50
Medium	\$1000 + \$100	\$97.50	\$1197.50
High	\$2500 + \$100	\$97.50	\$2697.50

Surrounding states generally require that designs be submitted by some form of certified individual which is then reviewed for compliance with that state’s or county’s regulatory regime. All states surveyed had a fee set for this review. See Appendix A for state by state listing of what is required for each state.

## **APPENDIX A: Individual State Practices**

- Alabama – State designs systems for 11 counties, as required by ordinance in those counties. All other counties require designs be submitted by certified individuals (Professional Engineer, Professional Surveyor, or Land Classifier). Fees set locally for design submittal or site evaluation.
- Arkansas – Design must be submitted to the state by a certified individual (certification obtained through state on-site wastewater program). Design & site reviewed by county health department representative for compliance with applicable regulations. There is a site review fee.
- Florida – Design must be submitted to the state by a certified individual (either Professional Engineer or Master Septic Contractor). Design & site reviewed by county health department representative for compliance with applicable regulations. Review fee is approximately \$100.
- Georgia – Design must be submitted to the state. No certification is required for design submittal. Design & site reviewed by county health department representative for compliance with applicable regulations. Review fee is approximately \$100.
- Louisiana – Design must be submitted to the state. No certification is required for design submittal. Design & site reviewed by county health department representative for compliance with applicable regulations. There is a review fee.
- Tennessee – Did not respond in time to be included in this report.