

Access to Properties for Septic or Holding Tank Pumping

The following statements are per Sections “5.2 Access” (for holding tanks) and “6.2 Access” (for septic tanks) of the Wayne Township and South Manheim Township “Sewage Management Plan.”

“The PCMA has the right of access, by lawful township ordinances, to any part of any property for the purposes of inspection, pumping, testing and performance of other functions relating to services rendered by the PCMA. The property owner shall keep clear access to that part of owner’s property in order to provide reasonable entrance and egress of the PCMA to perform its duties.”

Section 5.2 further states that for holding tanks, “The owner shall keep the draw-off pipe above grade in order to provide easy access. If removal of the manhole cover is required, it is the responsibility of the owner to have it uncovered and accessible.” Section 6.2 further states for septic tanks, “The owner shall keep the manhole cover above grade in order to provide easy access to the septic tank. If the septic tank is located some distance below grade, it is the owners responsibility to either uncover the tank/lid prior to pumping and inspection, or install risers on the manhole in order to bring the manhole cover above grade. These same conditions apply to dosing tanks, D-Boxes, and lateral clean-outs. If the owner chooses to keep all components below grade, it is the owners responsibility to cover (bury) the components following completion of the pumpings and inspections.” (Note: dosing tank lids should always be above grade.)

However, these are not the only access concerns stated in these sections. The sections go on to also address the existence of obstructions that either “prohibit or unnecessarily inhibit PCMA work.” The sections state that the owner is to eliminate the obstruction(s) as soon as possible.

The Sewage Management Plan provides a lot of detail concerning the “access” requirements for actually gaining entry into a holding tank (draw pipe/cover) or a septic tank (lid/cover) in order to pump them and most property owners fully understand these requirements. However, the “access” requirements concerning obstructions are not as detailed.

To perform a proper pumping, the need to physically locate the pump truck in near proximity to the holding or septic tank is very important. If the truck is at too great a distance from the tank or at a much higher elevation than the tank, proper pumping cannot occur. There is some flexibility as to the truck’s location but if either distance is too great, the time it takes to perform

a pumping is greatly increased and a much higher strain is placed on the pumping equipment which increases the risk of equipment failure or even a spill. If the elevation is too great, the pumping cannot be done at all.

Recently the PCMA has been running into a lot of obstruction type problems when trying to locate the pump truck properly to provide pumping services. In some cases trees or shrubs, which at one time were no problem, have grown since the last pumping and now their size is inhibiting, or even prohibiting, physical access of the pump truck to the proper pumping location. In other cases, new construction, new landscaping, narrow driveways, and soft ground fill, among other obstructions, are preventing or inhibiting physical entrance of the pump truck to a proper pumping location.

To assist the property owners we are providing the following physical details about our pump truck. The information should be used to evaluate the access conditions which presently exist on your property and to make any improvements or changes as necessary to correct any obstruction problems. In addition, this information should be kept in mind and considered when making any future changes to your property.

Height Clearance Needed for Pump Truck - 12 feet minimum

Width Clearance Needed for Pump Truck - 10 feet minimum

Gross Weight (total when full) of Pump Truck - 74,000 pounds

(Make sure driveways, bridges, etc. can support this! The PCMA is not responsible for damage caused by the weight of the pump truck!)

Length of Pump Truck - 35 feet

See the [Sewage Rates](#) page for current pumping charges.

Upon arrival at a property PCMA personnel will inspect the property for obstructions which would damage PCMA equipment prior to pumping. If any such obstructions are noted, the property owner will be informed. If the obstruction can be removed quickly, the property owner may do so and the pumping can continue. If the obstruction cannot be removed quickly, another appointment will be made to do the pumping after the obstruction is eliminated.

If any obstructions exist that inhibit access of the PCMA pump truck due to possible damage to the property owner's property, it is the responsibility of the property owner to notify the PCMA prior to pumping. Furthermore, it is the property owner's responsibility to eliminate such obstructions. If the property owner either fails to remove any such obstructions, or, grants permission for the pumping to continue without removal of the obstructions, then the property owner is responsible for any repairs needed to the property caused by access/egress of the pump truck.

If you have any questions about the information contained in this memo, please contact the PCMA office at 754-7222 or the sewage treatment plant at 754-7505.