

DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Within the Division of Industry Services, two programs have the responsibility of safeguarding public health and the waters of the State. The General Plumbing Program regulates plumbing installations including graywater reuse, stormwater plumbing systems, cross-connection controls and household water treatment devices. Private on-site wastewater treatment systems that receive domestic wastewater and discharge to the subsurface are regulated by the Private On-site Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) Program.

FY 2023 Highlights

- Counties are operating a maintenance program for all POWTS in their jurisdiction.
- The Department continued offering training programs for the POWTS industry. This included monthly DSPS POWTS program updates provided virtually, technical training, and inspector training targeting new county inspection staff.
- The Department hired 2 project plan review positions authorized under WI Act 67. The positions are approved through June 2023.
- As allowed by law, the last Wisconsin Fund Grant application period was provided in January 2022. Unless the law is changed, this grant program will not be funded again.
- DSPS Announced Funding for UW-Stevens Point Study by Soil and Waste Resources Scientist to Update Septage Disposal Standards.

Details of Ongoing Activities

Plumbing – Reuse, Stormwater and Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS)

In addition to public health and safety, the water supply and quality issues facing Wisconsin are a focus of the General Plumbing and POWTS programs in the Department of Safety and Professional Services.

General Plumbing – Reuse and Stormwater Use

The Department plumbing code includes standards for reuse of wastewater and stormwater. Currently, the Chapter SPS 382 stormwater rules create the ability for plumbing to be integrally involved with the design and installation of storm systems complying with Chapter NR 151, Wis. Admin. Code. At this time, there are over 315 approved stormwater use or wastewater reuse plumbing systems in Wisconsin.

Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS)

The Department maintains regular contact with the Department of Natural Resources regarding mutual issues of interest such as large onsite sewage systems, mixed wastewater treatment systems, Underground Injection Control (UIC) regulations, septage disposal and water well regulations. The Department also communicates with the US EPA Region 5 office regarding POWTS related matters. Department staff participate when requested in the development of a regional and national model code related to on-site sewage systems.

Data Management

DSPS is continuing its data integration information technology (IT) initiative called eSLA which stands for the Electronic Safety and Licensing Application. The POWTS program was involved with Phase 1 of the initiative which was rolled out in fall of 2018. The General Plumbing program was part of Phase 2 rolled out in June of 2019. The database also stores information on activities associated with on-site sewage system design, installation and maintenance. The Department is working with county code administrators and POWTS industry members to upgrade the reporting and recording of inspection, maintenance and servicing events for onsite sewage systems. The department promulgated a rule revision in late 2008 that implements POWTS program related provisions contained in 2005 Wisconsin Act 347 and further modified in 2011 by Wisconsin Act 134. The revised rule required that counties conduct an inventory by October 1, 2017, to identify all POWTS within their jurisdictional areas. With inventories maintained, Counties are required to further maintain a reporting program related to inspection, maintenance and servicing events for all POWTS in their jurisdiction. Additional software upgrades include a new credentialing software programming incorporating artificial intelligence which will aid in processing applications. This program is called "LicenseE".

For further information:

Visit the following web site: <https://dsps.wi.gov/pages/Home.aspx>

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