



November 6, 2023

To: City of Las Vegas Planning Department  
From: Northwest Area Resident's Association (NARA)  
Ref: Septic Tank Removal/Sewer Connection - AB220 Follow Up.

Planning Department,

May 21st, Clark County Commissioner Marilyn Kirkpatrick and Doa Ross, P.E. Deputy General Manager Engineering Las Vegas Valley Water District attended our regularly scheduled neighborhood association meeting and gave an update of the pending AB220 septic tank ordinance revision proposal(s) in progress. It was a full house attendance with a lot of RNP interest. Subsequent to that we have articles on file from the Review Journal.

With that, there are specific questions residents are still asking that we are not sure about in regards to septic tank to sewer conversion, and to be in compliance and any deference with the City of Las Vegas final ordinance revision.

Also, we are not sure if this a Planning Department, Licensure Department, Health Department, or other office to answer these questions. If this is not a Planning Department please direct it to the appropriate authority.

It is our understanding that the conversion from septic to sewer is now voluntary. It is not mandatory. (?) Again, we would appreciate it if you would please offer input on the following questions for the specific situations and scenarios listed below.

1. Conversion from a septic system to sewer is in fact now voluntary. There is no mandate. Is this correct?
2. With septic to sewer connections being voluntary are there any new restrictions placed on new septic system installations or on the continued use of established functional septic systems ?

3. Originally, the criteria for septic tank replacement was a 600 foot rule. With that, RNP and residential areas with septic systems beyond the 600 foot distance were not affected.

- Is this 600 ft. rule still applicable for any septic to sewer conversion situations?
- One source advises that it is 400 ft, and not 600 ft. (?)

4. The City/County has funding to cover the cost of extending a sewer line to a septic system residency street location within the 600 foot distance criteria for hook up. Is this correct?

5. Residents need to understand that with a sewer line being extended into their community this also extends the 600 foot distance from that new end point. Is this correct?

6. Who pays for the connection from the septic system residence home to the new street sewer line connection? The homeowner? The City? Or is there a shared cost with this expense?

7. What is the ordinance status now for failed septic tank/leach fields? If there is a failed septic tank or leach field beyond the original proposed 600 ft. sewer line distance, no matter what the distance (650 ft, 2,000 ft., etc.) it would seem reasonable that the home owner can continue with his septic system and simply apply for a waiver to allow for the tank/leach field to be replaced. Is this correct? If in fact the ruling is that if a septic system fails a homeowner has to pay for a sewer connection no matter how far the distance is, what is the fairness/justification in this standard?

8. When these septic systems were originally put in, (some of them well over half a century ago), there was no consideration that in the future there could be a mandatory sewer connection requirement...for whatever reasons. With that, some septic systems are located in the residential backyard. When the septic tank and leach field is in the backyard, this presents a totally problematic and cost prohibitive sewer connection scenario for most homeowners. With that:

- Can a resident with a septic system in the backyard within the original 600 foot criteria, (or any distance), apply for a waiver for a sewer connection and continue use of their operational septic system?
- Without a functional septic system or sewer connection a home/residence would have to be abandoned! If a backyard septic tank or leach field fails within the 600 foot distance, can they have it repaired/replaced and continue use of their septic system?

9. An RE residentially zoned parcel has to have access to either a sewer line or a septic system to build on it. If the parcel is beyond the 600 ft. criteria (650 ft, 2,000 ft, whatever), or otherwise in a septic system neighborhood, it would seem reasonable that a septic system is justified.

- Will the City allow a new septic system to be built on a vacant RE zoned residential septic system neighborhood parcel for home occupancy? Or,
- Will the parcel owner be forced to abandon the vacant property as an empty lot with no recourse to build?

10. Can a septic system (tank & leach field) be left in place when there is a new sewer hook up installed to a home, or does the home owner have to remove the septic tank and leach field and new fill dirt put in "the hole"?

11. In an RE zoned residential situation where there is insufficient gravity feed to a new sewer line:

- Will an existing septic system be allowed to continue?
- Will a new septic system be allowed to be installed?

12. How is the Las Vegas Water District aligned with septic system authorization? If a residential septic system fails will the Water District remove the water meter and access to city water?

13. This is not a question, but a concern, especially with older/retired RE residents on a fixed income. Presently, if septic conversion to sewer is voluntary this is not an issue. However, there is a concern about what

future penalties might be imposed if an expensive septic to sewer conversion becomes mandatory, and the home owner is not in financial position for compliance. Paying the "penalty price" to stay in their home as the alternative to the high cost of conversion becomes a lose/lose situation with the resident having an additional "tax" and the city not receiving the additional "reclamation water". This scenario will certainly be brought up (again) if septic to sewer conversion becomes mandatory.

Again, these are questions residents have asked in regards to compliance with the AB220 final ordinance. If you feel these would best be answered by a departmental staff presentation, we can arrange this within a regularly scheduled NARA meeting, and invite other neighborhood associations to attend. With that, we would appreciate your direction with the new septic system ordinance and with the questions listed above.

Thank you,

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