

## **OWTS Alphabet Soup**

### ***Definitions/descriptions of commonly used acronyms relating to Sonoma County Septic Regulations***

**OWTS:** Onsite Wastewater Treatment System – a broad term referring to any system for the collection, storage, treatment, neutralization, or stabilization of sewage (i.e. wastewater from your bathroom, laundry room and/or kitchen) that occurs on any developed property. This can include compliant (such as County-approved septic systems which generally include septic tank and dispersal system) and non-compliant (such as cesspools and/or redwood box) systems. The goal of an OWTS is to treat wastewater from a home or business and return treated wastewater back into the receiving environment (soil).

**PRMD:** County of Sonoma Permit Resource Management Department, also known as Permit Sonoma – this is the local, County agency that oversees County policies and enforces compliance with the OWTS Policy.

**SWRCB:** California State Water Resources Control Board, the state agency responsible for preserving, enhancing, and restoring the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and ensuring proper water resource allocation and efficient use, for the benefit of present and future generations.

**NCRWQCB:** North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board is the regional arm of the SWRCB that makes critical water quality decisions for its region, including setting standards, issuing permits (waste discharge requirements), determining compliance with those requirements, and taking appropriate enforcement actions.

The NCRWQCB is the local agency responsible for ensuring water quality standards and implementing the TMDLs, in this case, ensuring protection of public health by reducing pathogens and potential for pathogen exposure, controlling discharges of fecal wastes, reducing Fecal Indicator Bacteria levels, achieving draft statewide water quality objectives for the E. coli pathogen.

**TMDL:** Total Maximum Daily Load - the maximum amount of a particular pollutant (in this case Pathogens) that a surface water can receive and still meet water quality objectives. The Pathogen TMDL in the lower Russian River area is being developed to meet water quality criteria for contact recreation.

**APMP:** Advanced Protection Management Program – a geographic area within 600 linear feet from the top of the bank in the horizontal (map) direction next to pathogen impaired creeks and the Russian River that outlines requirements for OTWS in this zone; established by TMDL Action Plan, Local Agency, or in accordance with OWTS Policy and incorporated into Local Agency Management Program (LAMP);

The creeks in the APMP include: Brooks Creek, • Dutch Bill Creek • East Fork Russian River • Green Valley Creek • Lower Laguna De Santa Rosa • Lower Santa Rosa Creek • Mark West Creek • Porter Creek • Salt Hollow Creek • Upper Laguna de Santa Rosa • Upper Santa Rosa Creek • Ward Creek-Austin Creek • Windsor Creek in addition to the Russian River

An interactive map, by address or parcel, of the Russian River APMP can be found at:

<http://waterboards.maps.arcgis.com/apps/InformationLookup/index.html?appid=b9527b76e0874c139a59d8d53a538150>

## APMP Objectives

1. Establish plan for identifying failing and substandard OWTS
2. Establish criteria for determining when corrective action is needed
3. Establish minimum standards for new and replacement OWTS and OWTS in need of major repair
4. Ensure long-term compliance by establishing requirement for basic operational inspection of all OWTS within the APMP area