

Septic Tank Regulations from January 1st, 2020

The following rules from 2020, are causing concern. The question must be, will reedbeds continue to be accepted by The Environment Agency, from Jan 1st, 2020

Rules for existing and new treatment systems Use the correct treatment system

You must use a small sewage treatment plant to treat the sewage if you're discharging to a surface water such as a river or stream. A small sewage treatment plant (also known as a package treatment plant) uses mechanical parts to treat the liquid so it's clean enough to go into a river or stream.

Discharges from septic tanks directly to a surface water are not allowed under the general binding rules.

If you have a septic tank that discharges directly to a surface water you will need to replace or upgrade your treatment system by 1 January 2020, or when you sell your property if before this date.

If the Environment Agency finds evidence that your septic tank discharging to a surface water is causing pollution, you will need to replace or upgrade your system earlier than 1 January 2020. You will usually have to do this within 1 year, although this will be agreed on a case-by-case basis.

I wrote to ask the Environment Agency for their views. The following email shows their continued acceptance of Reedbeds as a method of waste water treatment, given the standard recommendations of use.

[Enquiries, Unit <enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk>](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk)

To

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24 May at 4:34 PM

Good afternoon

Thank you for your email.

A reed bed is a natural filtration process that can be used to improve the quality of effluent.

Discharge from a reed bed can meet the GBRs if it is used in conjunction with a septic tank and drainage field infiltration method for ground discharges, or a sewage treatment plant for surface water discharges.

Anything else will need an environmental permit.

In regards to the 'the requirement be for outflows', please could you provide more information:-

If you have any further questions which fall under the remit of the Environment Agency please let us know and we will be happy to help.

Kind Regards

Shelley Radford

Customer Service Adviser

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So, we can breathe happy, that a septic tank, filtering through a Reedbed, and into a Yes Living Soakaway, will continue to have EA approval.