



County of Santa Cruz

Health Services Agency ♦ Environmental Health Service

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Septic Tank Effluent Distribution Boxes Installation Procedure and Approved Models

A distribution box is used to divide the effluent flow from a septic tank into two or more leach trenches for soil absorption. Equal distribution is very important in order to take advantage of all the available leaching area. Spreading the effluent dose over all parts of the system maintains a relatively low soil means of locating the leaching device, making flow adjustments as needed, monitoring the disposal system, and making additions to the system.

Distribution boxes are typically made of reinforced concrete with plumbing “knock outs” into the box. The inlet must be higher than the outlets, with all outlets at the same level. The box must be large enough to accommodate the pipes and fittings used and still allow for flow adjustment. A sturdy gas-tight lid (and risers **as** needed) shall be provided to allow access from the surface. A list of approved manufacturers and distribution box model numbers is presented below.

The correct installation of distribution boxes requires proper planning and careful construction techniques. The location of the box(es) and associated plumbing, as well as the required elevations, must be worked out in advance. Grading of all portions of the system must be done with care such that the leach trench maximum allowable depth may be maintained. The distribution box(es) must be “wet set” on a pad of cement or grout on level undisturbed or mechanically compacted soil. All outlet plumbing must be set into box as level as possible with final flow adjustments made prior to final backfill. All piping must be resealed with grout. Environmental Health Service Staff must perform an inspection that demonstrates that the flow out of the box has been properly adjusted as part of construction inspection for final system approval. Adequate water must be available for the flow test.

Fine adjustments of flows to each leachfield shall be made as necessary to maintain the proper function of the distribution box. If any leachfield fails, a valve must be installed on the pipe from the distribution box to the leachfield and closed to stop the failure.

Approved Effluent Distribution Devices

M.C. Nottingham	Models: D-48 (5 exit ports)
D-49 (3 exit ports)	
Tom’s Septic Tanks	Septic Tank with built-in AD@box and all separate AD@boxes
O.S.I	Hydrosplitter
Zabel	Flow-divider