

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE BULLETIN

TOPIC:	Onsite Wastewater Practitioner Adherence to the Standard Practice Manual
PRACTICE AREA:	Onsite Wastewater
DISCIPLINE:	All Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioners
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This practice bulletin is being issued to registrants of the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC to provide clarity on the practice requirements for Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioners (ROWP) as it pertains to adhering to the BC Ministry of Health Sewerage System Standard Practice Manual (SPM).

Registrants are expected to adhere to these requirements in addition to the Professional Governance Act, ASTTBC Bylaws, applicable industry codes, standards, and ASTTBC practice guidance documents when carrying out work.

Background Information:

The current ROWP Practice Guidelines, January 26, 2017, version, section 2.2 Standard Practice Manual (SPM), indicates that the Sewerage System Regulation (SSR) establishes the SPM as a source of standard practice. It also defines that a professional may do a custom design or other deviation from the SPM, whereas a ROWP “**should**” adhere to the SPM.

Subsection 2.4 Adherence to the SPM, of the same document, goes on to state that ASTTBC’s policies “recommend that ROWPs comply with the SPM for all onsite wastewater projects in British Columbia”. It further states that if a ROWP utilizes a standard other than the current BC SPM, that the ROWP must provide a rationale for the decision and demonstrate a standard of equivalency or better for the proposed alternate design. Additionally stipulating that any deviation from the BC SPM or use of other standards shall be the burden of the ROWP to assure this is demonstrated. Specifically, these deviations mean deviations from the critical standards (SPM Volume II Standards).

ASTTBC registered ROWPs when planning, installing or maintaining a system are required to follow the BC Standard Practice Manual. To be clear, the practice standard required of ROWPs that they do not to deviate from the BC SPM critical standards. If situations arise where an alternate solution or plans are prepared, a SSR Professional must assure and take responsibility for that work.

To make this clear the current ROWP Practice Guidelines will be modified to reflect these requirements.

Practice Directive

Section 2.2 of the Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioner (ROWP) Practice Guidelines, January 26, 2017, version shall be replaced with the following:

2.2 Standard Practice Manual (SPM)

*The SSR establishes the SPM as a source of standard practice but also anticipates that other sources may be used. The inherent versatility in the regulation is required to support advanced design approaches such as custom design, performance-based design, or innovative design by Professionals. A SSR Professional may do a custom design or other deviation from the SPM. A ROWP Authorized Person (AP) **must** adhere to the SPM.*

2.4 Adherence to the SPM

2.4.1 ROWPs must follow the BC Sewerage System Standard Practice Manual (SPM). Where deviations from SPM non-critical standards (SPM Volume III Guidelines) are made, these must be clearly identified and explained within the design rationale and only under circumstances where full compliance with the SPM is not possible. Where deviations from critical standards (SPM Volume II Standards) are necessary, the ROWP must seek guidance and documented support from a SSR Professional or refer the project to a SSR Professional.

2.4.2 Deviating from the SPM standards for planning, installing and maintaining onsite wastewater systems will increase ROWP exposure to liability. Non-compliance with the SPM is a key consideration in ASTTBC Practice and Compliance, disciplinary or other practice review process.

Reference Documents:

- *Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioner (ROWP) Practice Guidelines, January 26, 2017.*
- *British Columbia Sewerage System Standard Practice Manual, Version 3*
- *British Columbia Sewerage System Regulation*

Revision History

Revision Number	Date of Publication	Filename	Description of Changes
1.0	November 29, 2021	PPB-2021-OW-001	Issued to registrants.