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**ARKANSAS AGENCIES SIGN AGREEMENT TO STREAMLINE DOMESTIC
WASTEWATER PERMITS**

Memorandum of Agreement designates a single lead agency and single point of contact for each wastewater system type, reduces duplicative review, and advances Governor Sanders' Executive Order 26-04

NORTH LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) and the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment (E&E) today announced a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that streamlines the review, permitting, and regulation of domestic wastewater systems and their collection systems across the state.

The agreement clarifies each agency's role, designates a single lead agency and a single point of contact for each category of system, and reduces unnecessary duplicative technical review — while maintaining proper protection for public health and the environment.

The MOA directly advances Executive Order 26-04, signed by Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders on February 16, 2026, which directs cabinet-level agencies — including ADH and E&E— to streamline permitting by eliminating unnecessary steps, aligning timelines across agencies, and providing applicants with clear processes and single points of contact.

A Clearer, Faster Path for Applicants

Historically, both agencies have been involved in reviewing and permitting certain domestic wastewater systems under separate statutory authorities, creating overlapping requirements for applicants. The MOA resolves that overlap by assigning a clear lead agency based on system type and design flow:

- Small surface discharge systems (less than 1,500 gallons per day): ADH will serve as the initial reviewing agency and primary point of contact, while the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) issues coverage under its federally delegated general National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The agencies will jointly develop a single-submission application process.

- Large surface discharge systems (1,500 gallons per day or more): DEQ will serve as the primary point of contact and permitting authority for treatment facilities and associated collection systems; ADH will limit its role to high-level public-health comments.
- Small subsurface (no-discharge) systems (less than 1,500 gallons per day): ADH will serve as the lead agency, issuing permits under its authority over sewage disposal systems.
- Large subsurface (no-discharge) systems (1,500 gallons per day or more): DEQ will serve as the lead agency under its Underground Injection Control program, with ADH providing technical support and soil analysis on request.

Efficiencies Created by the Agreement

- Single point of contact. Applicants interface with one designated lead agency for each system type, avoiding duplicative requests and minimizing delays.
- Reduced unnecessary duplication. Responsibilities are aligned with each agency's statutory and federally delegated authority, eliminating overlapping technical review and permitting while ensuring proper protection
- One-stop application. ADH and DEQ will cooperate on a single-submission application process for small surface discharge systems.
- Predictable thresholds. A clear 1,500-gallons-per-day design-flow threshold defines which agency leads, giving the regulated community certainty about where to apply.
- Ongoing review. The agencies will review implementation of the agreement biannually in even-numbered years and adjust as needed.

"This agreement gives Arkansans a clearer, faster, and more predictable permitting process while keeping our commitment to protecting public health," said Renee Mallory, Secretary of the Arkansas Department of Health. "By defining a single lead agency and a single point of contact for each type of system, we are removing duplication and making it easier for families, builders, and businesses to do the right thing."

"Executive Order 26-04 challenged state agencies to streamline how we permit, and this agreement delivers exactly that," said Shane Khoury, Secretary of the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment. "We are aligning our work with our delegated authority, cutting out redundant reviews, and protecting Arkansas' natural resources at the same time."

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